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HEALING

FREE GUIDE TO ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE

JAN MORRIS: HOORAY FOR THE WELSH WEEKEND

WIN A... START PLAYING FANTASY FORMULA ONE

PAGE 52

Plasma is to be imported

Safety ban on British blood

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

BRITISH blood is not safe enough to have products made from it because of the risk of spreading the human form of 'mad cow' disease, the Government has been advised.

ma, the liquid left when red and white cells and blood platelets are removed from whole blood. It is used to treat 350,000 patients a year in Britain.



Jack and Lynda Ramsden after winning their High Court case yesterday. "We have won everything, haven't we?" Mr Ramsden asked his solicitor

Racing trio's £200,000 libel victory

By Adrian Lee

A CHAMPION jockey and a husband-and-wife training partnership won almost £200,000 in libel damages yesterday from The Sporting Life which said that they had deliberately thrown a race.

The Sporting Life, owned by Mirror Group Newspapers, had said in an unsigned editorial that the Ramsdens and the jockey had conspired to cheat the racing public.



Clarke disappointed

won on a 10-2 majority verdict. Mr Fallon, who was not at the High Court to hear the jury award him £75,000, was told on his mobile telephone shortly before winning the 3.35 at Lingfield.

man delivered the verdict. With tears in her eyes she mouthed "thank you". Her husband jotted down the figures, turned to his solicitor and asked: "We have won everything, haven't we?"

in racing wants to win. We just want to train winners for their owners; that is what racing is all about and the betting consideration is totally secondary.

Will of Princess amended to meet her wishes

By Frances Gibb, Legal Correspondent

THE will of Diana, Princess of Wales, has had to be extensively amended to ensure that her wishes over her £21 million estate are met and that gifts go to her godchildren and former butler.

Robinson faces a new inquiry

Geoffrey Robinson, the Paymaster General, faces a further Commons investigation into the failure to declare directorships linked with companies owned by the late Robert Maxwell.

Fans facing ticket famine

By Daniel McGrory

ENGLAND football supporters wanting to see this summer's World Cup matches in France are to get just 9,128 tickets for the team's three qualifying games in spite of the French being ordered to provide more for visiting fans.

41,000, 2,589 have been allocated. The Football Association had hoped that as many as 150,000 extra tickets would be given to the 32 competing countries after Fifa, football's governing body, ordered the French hosts to distribute them more fairly.



"You can't bite me - I'm British"

Table with 2 columns: Category and Price. Includes TV & Radio, Weather, Crosswords, Letters, Obituaries, etc.

Icelandic blast of cold ahead

Cold air from Iceland will descend on Britain this weekend, ending one of the mildest Februaries on record.

Curtains for Royal Opera House's TV 'villain'

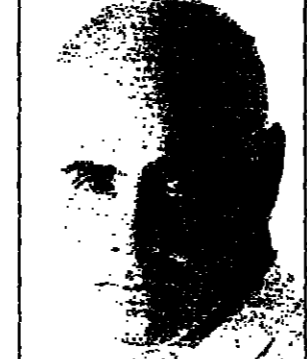
By Dalva Alsborge, Arts Correspondent

THE Royal Opera House executive whose abrasive style of dealing with staff was captured by a fly-on-the-wall television documentary has been dismissed.

Sir Colin Southgate, the newly-appointed chairman, Mary Allen, the chief executive, and the three members of the Board who have been appointed so far.

crisis, expressed disbelief that an organisation handling £98 million over the past five years could not even produce monthly balance sheets.

not resign... after all I've done for them." He was seen as a Machiavellian figure after the BBC documentary, The House.



Cooper: abrasive style shocked TV viewers

Advertisement for Oystel Super-Savers USA 5p, listing international call rates for various countries like Singapore, Australia, Pakistan, etc.

Small advertisement for a service, possibly related to the 'You can't bite me' cartoon.

Barcode and publication information at the bottom left of the page.

# Gloriana wreaks revenge over Pooh Five fiasco

Gwyneth Dunwoody (Lab, Crewe & Nantwich) was looking fabulous yesterday. Generous of mind, gracious of manner, graceful of form and richly robed in autumnal colours, this paragon of every parliamentary virtue, half woman and half goddess, tossed a noble head of golden curls and spoke wisdom and truth to MPs. Members were struck dumb by the majesty of her words, the power of her argument and the splendour of her bearing.

Among many she is known as Gloriana. Sweet as any nightingale, her song did not disappoint.

"If anybody outside is to know what is happening in this House..." they should not have to rely

(my italics) "on a series of very cheerfully written and wholly inaccurate reports which relate only to the individual idiosyncrasies of MPs." Sketchwriters reeled, cut to the quick. MPs looked up at us in the Press Gallery and pointed. It was as she was talking about!

Wholly inaccurate? Dwelling on personal idiosyncrasies? This was cruel and unfair. We never exaggerate. If anything we understate. Poetic licence has no place in the sketchwriter's trade. We describe only what we see. We are scrupulously honest.

The very thought that we might trivialise, or do anything to undermine the dignified efforts of Members — anything to attract attention



**MATTHEW PARRIS**  
POLITICAL SKETCH

to the individual rather than the argument — repels us. We see Parliament as a noble forum for the debate of great national questions, not vulgar posturing.

Let me offer an example of our refusal to stoop. Taking advantage of the Prime Minister's important visit to America a fortnight ago, a backbench MP recently elbowed her way into all the newspapers (and television too) by means of a publicity stunt. Raising what was called "the Poohgate scandal," she

tabled Questions demanding the return from a New York public library of stuffed birds representing Winnie-the-Pooh, Eeyore, Tigger, Piglet and Kanga.

"MP Demands Freedom For The Pooh Five" said the British headlines. "Pooh On You!" cried the *New York Post*. The American President was asked to comment. The story began encroaching on the serious coverage the press would normally give a prime ministerial visit to Washington.

Then she gave it another stir. In a full-page article in the *Daily Mail*, the MP was quoted as saying: "Just like the Greeks want their Elgin Marbles back, so we want our Pooh back — along with his splendid friends."

Of course, it was tempting for Parliamentary sketchwriters to get in on this act. But — without wanting to sound too high-minded — we felt that bids for personal publicity like this were beneath us. Mrs Dunwoody's posturing on behalf of the Pooh Five did not make it into our sketches. We might have been accused of personalising, or producing cheerfully written trash.

Also on his feet yesterday after-

noon was Eric Forth (C, Bromley & Chislehurst). Mr Forth was wearing a charcoal suit, a dark blue shirt with a white collar, a yellow tie of sunflower design, and a sky-blue handkerchief. He wanted to know "about the relationship between this House and the Government".

Many of his audience must have wanted instead to know about the relationship between his tie, his shirt and his handkerchief.

Leaving the Chamber, Mr Forth joined Mrs Dunwoody and, a rose between his teeth, tangoed with her out through the doors, whooping wildly. As one who composes very cheerful but wholly inaccurate reports from the Commons, you would expect me to write that.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Founder quits GTech board

Victor Markowicz resigned last night from the board of GTech, the American company that he co-founded and which is a key member of Camelot, the National Lottery operator. His sudden departure comes three weeks after Guy Snowden resigned as chairman. The two men set up GTech in 1976.

Mr Markowicz is a mathematician with a gift for developing lottery systems. He and Mr Snowden turned GTech into the world's biggest lottery company. This month the High Court awarded Richard Branson, chairman of Virgin, £100,000 damages against Mr Snowden in settlement of a libel action.

### Cook divorce

The estranged wife of Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, has begun divorce proceedings. Margaret Cook, 52, a consultant haematologist at St John's Hospital in Livingston, lodged divorce papers at Edinburgh Sheriff Court earlier this week. Mr Cook is unlikely to contest the move.

### Irvine backed

Tony Blair said last night that Lord Irvine of Lairg was "delivering" as a Cabinet minister by reforming legal aid and by his management of the legislative programme. In an interview with ITN he said that criticism of the Lord Chancellor would "cut no ice" with voters.

### Schools threat

Ministers threatened yesterday to use planned powers to close unpopular schools if local authorities failed to cut the 773,000 surplus places in England's classes. Stephen Byers, the School Standards Minister, has asked more than 120 authorities for an explanation.

### Pupil's death

A pupil described as the most popular boy in school apparently killed himself in an attack of nerves over mock A levels. David Tebb, 18, from Caerleon, South Wales, threw himself off a multi-story carpark on Sunday. Caerleon Comprehensive School cancelled the exams.

### Greater care

THE number of childcare places available around the country will more than double to 250,000 in the coming year with parents able to take advantage of new out-of-school play schemes this Easter. Harriet Harman, the Social Security Secretary, will tell MPs today.

### Duty-free losses

More than 23,000 jobs will be lost following next year's abolition of duty-free sales in the European Union, research has said. The study, for the Duty Free Confederation, claimed travel costs would increase by an average of £14 per person, as operators try to offset loss of retail income.

### Oasis warning

Australian aircraft cabin crew have refused to fly with the rock band Oasis unless group members guarantee they will behave. The warning follows allegations of outrageous behaviour on a flight from Hong Kong earlier this week. Crew have threatened to ground flights.

# Robinson faces new inquiry on Maxwell

By Andrew Pierce and Chris Ayres

THE pressure on Geoffrey Robinson, the Paymaster General, intensified last night after it emerged he faces a further Commons investigation into the failure to declare directorships linked with companies owned by the late Robert Maxwell.

Mr Robinson was on the board of three separate companies in the 1980s that were connected to the disgraced businessman. None of them was declared in the MPs' register of interests. One paid him a salary of up to £200,000. Peter Lilley, the Shadow Chancellor, is writing to Sir Gordon Downey, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, seeking an urgent inquiry. Sir Gordon is already studying documents which showed that Mr Robinson, a multi-millionaire, was chairman of a British machine tools company from 1983 to 1995. He did not register his position with Agie UK, which paid him a salary from £17,000 to £51,000, until 1987. Serious splits have emerged in the Commons standards and privileges committee, which works with Sir Gordon.

over whether to summon the Paymaster General to give evidence. Sir Gordon has addressed the committee about the initial complaint but the revelation about further alleged breaches will intensify the demands for the committee to conduct a full-scale inquiry.

The 11-strong committee has divided down party lines over the complaint about Agie UK. The committee has deferred consideration on the complaint until Sir Gordon has produced a report. Some MPs have argued that the lapse was too long ago to merit a proper examination.

Last year Bob Wareing, a backbench Labour MP, was suspended for a month by the committee for failing to declare a company interest from which he drew no financial gain. One Government minister said yesterday: "The comparison with Bob Wareing is unfortunate for us."

The prospect of similar punishment being meted out to Mr Robinson, whose £12.5 million in an offshore trust has already caused deep embarrassment, would intensify pressure for him to stand down.

Peter Lilley said last night: "I have written to Sir Gordon Downey about these latest omissions. They involve companies connected directly to Robert Maxwell."

"It appears that Geoffrey Robinson was systematically omitting to inform the House of Commons of his business interests with the late Robert Maxwell right up until the point he fell off his boat," David Heathcoat-Amory, the Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury, who lodged the first complaint, added: "It is like peeling an onion. Every time you remove one layer you find something else underneath."



Geoffrey Robinson: pressure over links



Huntsman Charlie Watts blows his horn as the beacon is lit at Hardy's Monument near Dorchester, Dorset

# Beacons blaze out in support of countryside protest march

By Michael Hornsby, COUNTRYSIDE CORRESPONDENT

MORE than 5,000 beacons were lit across Britain last night, from the Shetland Islands in the north to the Scilly Isles in the south, in a blaze of rural protest that will culminate with a mass march through central London on Sunday.

Some of the bonfires were lit on traditional beacon sites, once used to give warning of the approach of the Spanish Armada, and others on farms and in gardens. The fires sent out a signal of anger from farmers and country dwellers who say their interests are being ignored by a hostile Government.

The lighting of the fires began in the north of Scot-

land at 6.10pm, and then continued at two-minute intervals, to create the effect of waves of light rolling towards London, where the last small fire was lit at about 6.30pm.

This final beacon was a torch ignited in Grosvenor Gardens, near Victoria Station, by Martin Bell, the Independent MP. Kate Hoey, the backbench Labour MP, and Paul Tyler and Lembit Opik, both Liberal Democrats.

The Duke of Westminster gave permission for the gardens to be used. The Duke is a board member of the Countryside Alliance, the former British Field Sports Society, which is organising Sunday's

march. At least 150,000 people are expected to take part.

Charles Mann, a Gloucestershire farmer, who played a leading role in organising the network of bonfires, said: "The beacons are a symbol of the fire of resentment running through the countryside. The catalyst was the threat to ban hunting, but we are now seeing a whole way of life coming under attack with falling incomes and the possibility that a right to roam could mean landowners losing control of their land."

The Private Member's Bill to outlaw hunting with bounds, sponsored by the

backbench Labour MP Michael Foster, has completed its committee stage and is due to have its third reading in the Commons on March 6.

More than 320 beacons were estimated to have been lit in Gloucestershire alone, while 35 front gardens were lit up in the East Sussex village of Mayfield. In Cornwall, a hot air balloon over Bodmin Moor, the highest point in the county, lighting it up with the burners like a Chinese lantern.

Conservative Party leader William Hague and Paddy Ashdown, leader of the Liberal Democrats, are expected to join the march.

# Will of Princess corrected to ensure gifts for her godchildren

Continued from page 1  
Mishcon de Reya, with a subsequent addition to alter one of the executors in February 1996.

But despite the Princess's divorce settlement in July 1996 the will was not altered and her untimely death obliged firms of solicitors acting for the executors and the two Princesses to obtain court approval for the

changes. The main variation is to make it easier for the Princesses to receive money from the estate before they reach the age of 25 as provided for in the will. As the will originally stood, they would inherit at 25, provided they survived the Princess for three months.

But several omissions, or what some critics call "unthoughtful" or

"sloppy drafting", have also had to be remedied.

One source said: "Basically not a lot of thought went into it. It has all the hallmarks of someone saying 'You'd better make a will'. It is just thoroughly unimaginative and pretty standard. But then, to be fair, nobody thought she was going to die." Some have also expressed the

view that the godchildren have not benefited as they should have done and as a result, in hindsight, may have "lost out".

The Princess's will is prefaced by an expression of wishes as to the dissolution of her "channels". But no specific gifts or sums of money are made, so it has been left to the executors (Anthony Julius, partner

with Mishcons and the Princess's mother and sister) to give the godchildren something to fulfil the Princess's wish that that they should benefit.

It is understood that one godson, for example, has been given some porcelain figures.

A worker in the wills department of Somerset House said: "We know

the release is imminent but we haven't been given a day yet. I suppose there will be a lot of interest but it is difficult to judge."

Guy Bigland, the marketing director of the Princess's executors solicitors, Lawrence Graham, said: "The reality is we haven't applied for grant probate yet but it will be very soon, probably next week."

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# Racing partnership with winning touch

JACK RAMSDEN is a man accustomed, more often than not, to beating the odds. Yesterday he pulled off one of the biggest gambles of his life in the libel trial at the High Court in London.

Some might feel that *The Sporting Life's* biggest mistake, in suggesting that Mr Ramsden and his wife, Lynda, had cheated with Top Cees, was not only to offend the facts, but also to offend their vanity. If ever anyone had cause for vanity, it is the modern Turf's most colourful partnership.

Say what you like about the Ramsdens — if not to the same extent as *The Sporting Life* — they certainly don't look like cheats. Mrs Ramsden, who produced a different outfit for 18 days in court, is a lady who might well be described by some judges as fragrant. Her husband of 21 years, meanwhile, could be mistaken for a stockbroker, albeit a conspicuously natty one, which is exactly what he once was.

Since Mrs Ramsden, 48, took out a licence to train racehorses (initially in the Isle of Man) in 1987, the couple's reputation for shrewdness has been honoured by rivals and allies alike. The methods her husband brought to the behind-the-scenes operation were unorthodox. With it more, they worked. What the

**Chris McGrath suggests the Top Cees action was not undertaken at the sort of odds that would normally appeal on the course**

same astuteness that he placed his own horses, he placed those of other trainers in a pecking order calculated by a blend of science (whether computing fractions of seconds, or the number of strides taken by a running, or even walking, horse) and instinct. As a result, Mr Ramsden, 56, could make up to £100,000 in a good year from gambling. Those mortals who consider to a good year might benefit from his advice, during the course of the trial, that backing horses at skinty prices is the short way to Casey Street. Certainly his court action, with costs rising to over half a million pounds, was not undertaken at the sort of odds that would ordinarily appeal to him on the racecourse.

Mr Ramsden prefers to consider himself a businessman, rather than a professional gambler. Either way, he has helped to finance the expensive renovation of Breckenborough House, near Thirsk in North Yorkshire, into a state-of-the-art training

complex. The family swimming pool is known as the Arbury Street Pool, in honour of the horse that landed a gamble for Mr Ramsden in 1989. He staked £1,500 win and £500 place on the 14-1 shot. Little wonder that all the major bookmaking firms have closed his account. He told the court that he now relied on his own friends and kinsfolk, fellow trainers and owners such as Robert Sangster to place bets on his behalf.

The same intuition enabled the Ramsdens to discover the suggests of riding talent when still coated by inexperience and obscurity. Above all, they spotted Kieren Fallon, who has become a worthy champion since riding Top Cees.

In the interim, Mrs Ramsden's deft touch with a racehorse completed a potent partnership. The Ramsdens' success came in quantity, with a high of 56 winners during 1995, as in quality, notably with horses such as Chilly Billy, Rafferty's Rules, Island Magic, Travelling

Light and, lest we forget, poor old Top Cees himself.

The Ramsdens decline the caricature of a Yorkshire farming stable that can pull off an occasional gamble in a Caterick seller. They are dapper, slender and self-assured. Resenting a suggestion that their prosperity depended on her husband's speculations, Mrs Ramsden said: "We have always lived in very pleasant, large houses. We haven't suddenly jumped up from a council house."

While their patrons included senior figures from racing's establishment, the trial also confirmed mutterings of discontent among certain stewards' secretaries — the professional advisers to the amateur stewards who preside over disciplinary inquiries on the racecourse. The roots of their dissatisfaction, doubtless along with some betting shop punters, was that the Ramsdens often like their horses to be ridden, with bravado, from the rear of the field.

They like them to be switched off, away from the exhausting action, and produced with a turn of foot as the leaders tire. It is exactly the kind of flourish that suits their personalities. As *The Sporting Life* may now recognise, it is also a tactic that can be all too easily misinterpreted.



Kieren Fallon was a double winner yesterday — in court and the 3.35 at Lingfield

## Sporting paper is bound for new life

By RICHARD EVANS RACING EDITOR  
*The Sporting Life* has not run its last race, despite having to pay out libel damages of £195,000 and legal costs likely to exceed £500,000.

There had been speculation during the trial that if the paper lost the case it would end up in the knacker's yard, but Mirror Group Newspapers insisted last night that the outcome would not affect the paper or its future. A spokesman said that all libel actions were handled on a company basis, rather than falling to individual newspapers.

Coincidentally, MGN takes formal possession today of *The Racing Post*, the arrival to the *Life* for the past 12 years, after acquiring it for £1 from Sheikh Mohammed, the driving force in the Al-Maktoum family of Dubai. The *Post* will remain a daily racing paper, but MGN intends to change the *Life* into a tabloid general sports paper after the Grand National in April, although no launch date has been set.

The *Life*, which was founded in March, 1859, and became a daily newspaper in 1883, enjoyed a circulation of close to 200,000 in its prime but in recent years it has fallen to a quarter of that figure.

# False dawn dashes Lowestoft's hopes of millennium first

Bad timing lets town down, says Damian Whitworth

THE people of Lowestoft were banking on the millennium to transform the Suffolk fishing port into a focus of national attention. They had boasted that Britain's most easterly town would see the dawn of January 1, 2000, before any other corner of these islands.

On that assumption, hotels were booked up two years ago, champagne parties are scheduled, and a laser and light show has been planned.

Then someone phoned the Royal Greenwich Observatory to check exactly when the dawn would break. Several minutes later than a number of other places, they were told.

The dawn of the new millennium will break first over the bare headland of South Foreland, east of Dover, at 7.58am. A minute later, people in Dover, Ramsgate, Dungeness and Folkestone will, weather permitting, see the sunrise. The observatory explained that the tilt of the Earth's axis would not be seen in Lowestoft until 8.04. The Sun's azimuth, or position on the horizon, will be 127 degrees.

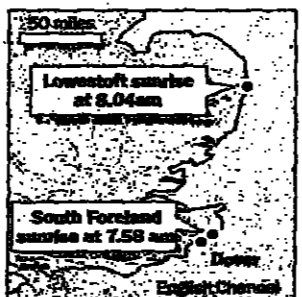
Julie Loker, for the observatory, said a computer program had worked out that South Foreland, which is 23 miles west of Lowestoft, would get Britain's earliest sunrise.

"I was first contacted by someone from Lowestoft who wanted to confirm that the town was going to see the sunrise first and what time it would be. He was a little put out when I put the information

into the computer and it worked out that Lowestoft was going to be six minutes behind South Foreland. Lowestoft would only have had the earliest sunrise if the new year was in September.

"That is the only time of the year when the Sun rises exactly in the east. In the winter it always swings around to the south-east. You cannot alter that. It is a rule of nature."

At Lowestoft's Hatfield Hotel, which has had its 33 rooms for New Year's Eve 1999 fully



booked for more than two years and is planning a dawn champagne party with a jazz band on the terrace for 200 people, they were putting on a brave face last night. "I cannot argue with experts... but it is still significant that we are Britain's most easterly point," said Ibrahim Mohammed, the hotel's operations director.

"We have beautiful beaches and a superb location and I am sure people will rather be here than in Dover."

Robert Blizard, the Labour MP for Waveney, which includes Lowestoft, insisted the

town would technically still see the new millennium before anywhere else in Britain. "It is true that the Sun will rise over Dover first — but most people are going to be celebrating at midnight on New Year's Eve. They are not going to wait until the morning.

"As time is worked out from east to west, Lowestoft will see the millennium one minute and four seconds before Dover. Lowestoft has a longitude of one degree and 44 minutes compared to one degree, 18 minutes for Dover. Although the whole country uses Greenwich Mean Time, the time in Lowestoft is really earlier than anywhere else," he said.

In Dover, meanwhile, the news of the millennium dawn came as a surprise. "We had no idea," said Donna Sowerby, the council's arts and events manager. "We have got nothing specific planned to celebrate so far — but we will now be asking our local community whether they want to do anything. We don't want to spend public money on things people don't want. But it is absolutely flustering that we will see the Sun first here."

Cyrn Prosser, the Labour MP for Dover, was quicker off the mark. "It is great news that the Earth has tilted in favour of my constituency. We have always been proud to be the gateway to Europe. Now it looks like as if the Dover area will also be the gateway to the new millennium. Mr Blizard and the people of Lowestoft... are welcome to come down here to celebrate the sunrise."

# New church prayers put their faith in past

THE Church of England has returned to the style of the 4th century in drawing up its communion service for the next millennium.

Anglican liturgists have done away with the language of the 1970s, widely condemned as lacking in spiritual depth when the *Alternative Service Book* was published in 1980. Instead, they have put early church spirituality at the heart of the communion service, the celebration of the eucharist. The six new eucharistic prayers, published in today's *Church Times*, are currently being "tried out" in 800 parishes across England.

Some of the prayers are adaptations of ones already in use but the most radical, the sixth, is based on a model used in the Eastern Orthodox Church. Because of its rhythmic and spiritual language, it is expected to be most popular with charismatic. Frequent

**Liturgists in search of deeper spirituality reject language of 1970s, reports**

Ruth Gledhill

acclamations such as: "Amen, Lord we believe" and "Amen, Come Holy Spirit" are interjected between brief texts on creation, the Holy Spirit and the Last Supper.

The prayer marks a departure from the Latin tradition that has continued to influence the Church of England in its eucharistic celebrations, and a return to the more ancient tradition still seen in the

Orthodox communities. The prayer is influenced mainly by the 4th century Prayer of St Basil, used throughout the Orthodox community.

The Bishop of Salisbury, the Right Rev David Stancliffe, chairman of the liturgical commission, said: "One of the key questions to address is whether we need a multiplicity of prayers. Part of the argument for a diversity is the pragmatic one, that with more authorised choice there is less excuse for people to plead unmet needs as a reason for doing their own thing."

All six prayers are expected to come before the General Synod in July for approval. Two years ago, the synod rejected six earlier experimental versions of the eucharistic prayers.

The Church is revising its entire liturgy in time for 2001, when the *Alternative Service Book* finally expires.

**Cecilia Bartoli prizes two instruments above all others. Her voice and her Rolex.**

When Cecilia Bartoli began taking singing lessons she was amazed by her own voice. "I'd never been interested in singing," she says.



"So when I discovered this voice, I was thrilled."

It's a voice that has taken her to the pinnacle of the opera world.

"I love singing now," Cecilia says.

"I listen to the music and I start to become a part

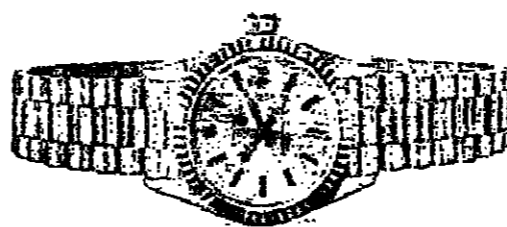
of it. It's a wonderful feeling."

Cecilia Bartoli feels a similar involvement with her Rolex Oyster Perpetual. "We need each other. We keep each other going."

Clearly, Cecilia derives much pleasure from perfection.

She believes that when every detail is flawless, the performance will be perfect.

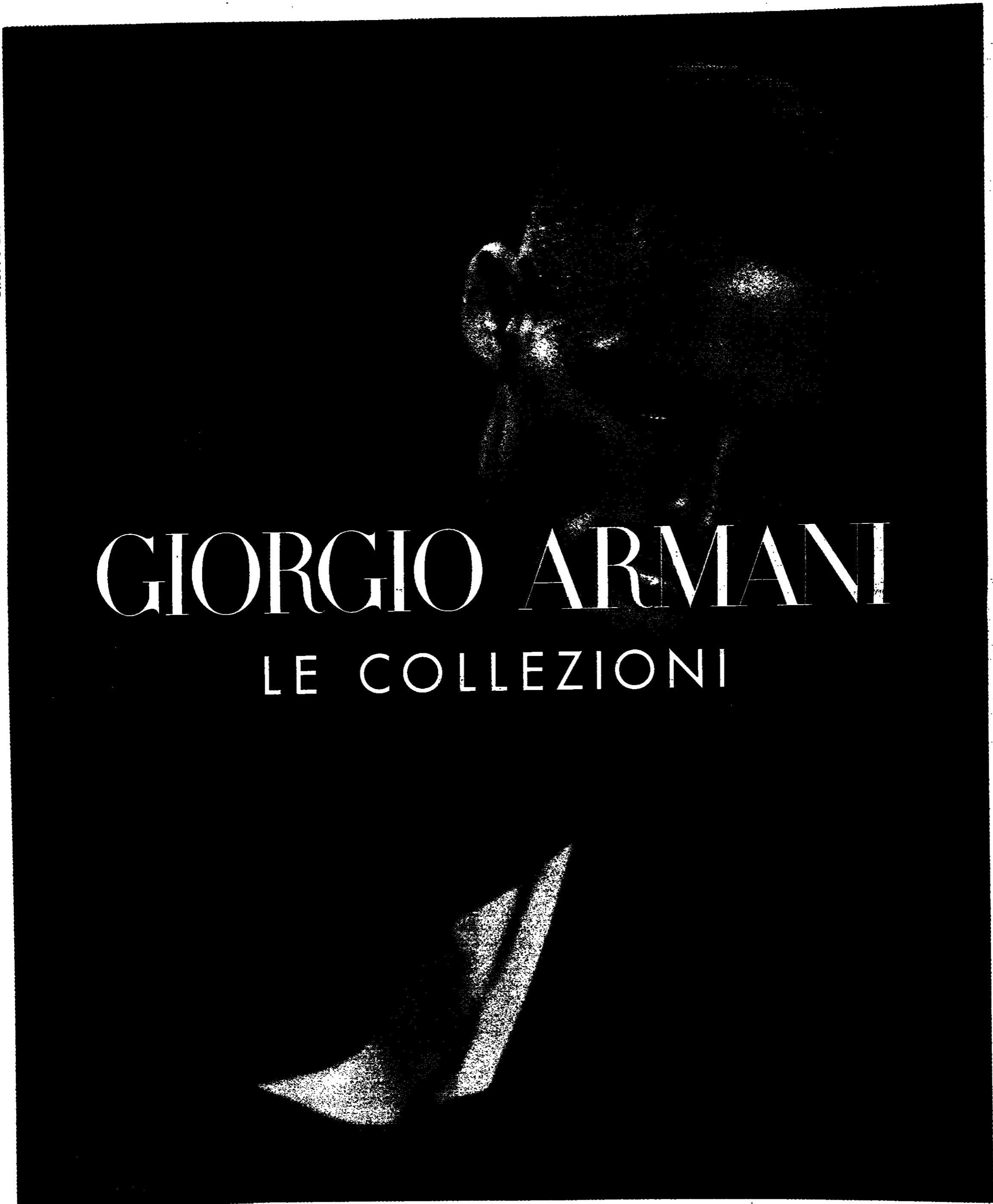
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# The maestro's choice for a night at the opera

### Damian Whitworth treads gingerly as he joins the queue auditioning for a role as an extra in Verdi's Aida

IN A few weeks the Earls Court arena will be transformed into Ancient Egypt and a teeming multitude of characters who look like they have walked off the walls of a pharaoh's tomb will perform Verdi's *Aida*. In among the swartzy soldiers of Radames's army, the Ethiopian prisoners and Moorish slaves will be the somewhat incongruous figure of a six-foot, ginger-haired Englishman, I am he.

Harvey Goldsmith is staging another of his operatic extravaganzas and yesterday he held auditions for extras. The advertisement said everyone was welcome, so I went along.

Hopefuls had been queuing outside the West London exhibition hall since dawn. By the time I arrived, a few minutes after the doors opened at 10am, two long lines, one male, one female, stretched into the vast interior of Earls Court's second arena. I joined the end of the line. It was explained that

singing or acting experience were not necessary. They were after people who had the "right look". A total of 499 extras were required for roles including four people to be "dog heads". Casting directors ran along the line under the instruction of Giuseppe Raffa, the director of the show who was referred to by others as "maestro".

On one side I had Ricky Bull, 27, who had no acting experience. "I've been doing labouring and driving since I left school," he said. "I've never really done anything exciting and I thought it was time for a change." On the other side, Farah el Moumane, 22, from Morocco, not only looked the part but had studied performing arts at college.

It didn't take long for Mr el Moumane to be plucked from the crowd and told that he would cut it as one of the guards of Ramphis, the high priest. The rest of us shuffled to fill the space, exchanged sideways glances and puffed

out our chests. The casting directors trotted backwards and forwards. Never once did their eyes alight on me.

The humiliation of rejection looked to be drawing closer. Open auditions attract all sorts of hopeless wannabes but it appeared that they were preferred over me. A motley crew of the slack-jawed, knock-kneed and gap-toothed were handed contracts. A man shuffling unsettlingly behind me said: "I'm getting restless. I haven't had my medicine." Ten seconds later he was chosen.

The few of us left, conspicuously in the middle of the hall, prepared to slip away, quietly crushed. Then, after 90 minutes of being invisible "You are a soldier," Giuseppe Raffa, himself — the maestro — made me a spear carrier. "Me?" I croaked. "Of course."

Of course! Already humming the Grand March, I collected my contract. This was bizarre — I learnt that I must not drink alcohol less



Extra, extra: Damian Whitworth, second from right, amid hopefuls aiming to catch the casting director's eye. Finally the role of spear carrier is his

than eight hours before a rehearsal or wear sunglasses on stage — but I didn't care. Others did care. Some ripped up their contracts and

stormed off after learning their only payment would be two tickets to a performance and free soft drinks. "We've been sent by our agents," said

one woman. "I could have done two hours' acting this morning." "Why didn't you then?" said Mr Goldsmith. Even when it transpired that

everyone, *everyone*, who had turned up had got a part and more recruiting will have to be done. I had only one worry: my ginger head?

"Oh," said the maestro, Raffa, airily. "We'll put something over that."

Opera, page 37

# Five months' grace helped hoax student fool Oxford

By TIM JONES

TO his fellow students, Richard Ray appeared an imposing figure as he regularly read *Grace in Latin* before they ate in the ancient dining hall at Worcester College, Oxford.

Senior dons at high table were impressed by his erudition and pleased he volunteered so regularly to stand on the podium to recite the famous honours ritual. But it was all an elaborate hoax: his science graduate in order to research a book on student life, a court was told yesterday.

Ray secured himself rooms in the college, awarded himself a doctorate and told anybody who asked that he was reading philosophy. But, Paddy Roche told Oxford magistrates court yesterday, he was living a lie.

Mr Roche, for Ray, said: "In one sense it was a breathtakingly simple scam and one is left with a misguided sense of admiration for the way he did it." Ray, 31, the court was told, moved to Oxford last summer and secured a job at the university's administration office, which produces identity cards for all the students. Clare Tucker, for the prosecution, said the defendant, who held a first-class degree in computer science from Brunel University, produced a card for himself as which described him as Dr Richard Ray.

Armed with the card, she said, Ray applied for a room in Worcester House, owned by the college, and moved in after his name was pulled out of a hat in a ballot. He used the privileges extended by the card to gain access to the Bodleian Library where he regularly used the computer facilities.

Eventually, she said, people became suspicious. In spite of his deception there had been no financial loss to the college. Mr Roche said that Ray, an

Asian whose parents were born in South Africa, was highly intelligent and had four A-level passes in the top grade. "He wanted to write a book about the life of an Oxford student. The university has suffered no loss and when he was rumbled, he made a full confession. It is an extraordinary story but nobody has suffered."

He said that Ray, during his five-month stay at the college, had regularly paid the accommodation fee of £65 a week. After the case, Ray, who pleaded guilty to obtaining services by deception between September 1 last year and January 27 this year, appeared to be completely unrepentant about his five-month deceit.

He now lives with his parents in Eastbourne and was remanded on bail for a month for probation reports. He was told he faces a community service sentence.

Ray, who also admitted forging the card, said his original intention had been to research a book on why there were so few Asian dons at Oxford. He said: "I changed my mind and decided to write a book about what it is like to be a student at Oxford. This case is very good publicity for me."

"I decided, like George Orwell in his book *Down and Out in Paris and London*, to immerse myself into student life. But it was no scam really, it was more like in-depth research."

Ray, who now lives on a £44 a week jobseeker's allowance said he was convinced his knowledge of Latin and saying the *Grace* in his gown had helped him to gain credence among the students and dons. "I don't know why I was rumbled — it may have something to do with the fact that I hardly ever attended a lecture."

# Curry man meets his Vindaloo

THE editor of Britain's leading curry-house magazine has resigned after branding Indian restaurant waiters "miserable gits".

Managers at *Tandoori Magazine* said: Iqbal Wajhab's resignation was "essential" after the storm an editorial in this month's issue caused. Distancing themselves from Mr Wajhab's comments, the officials said a full apology would appear in the next edition.

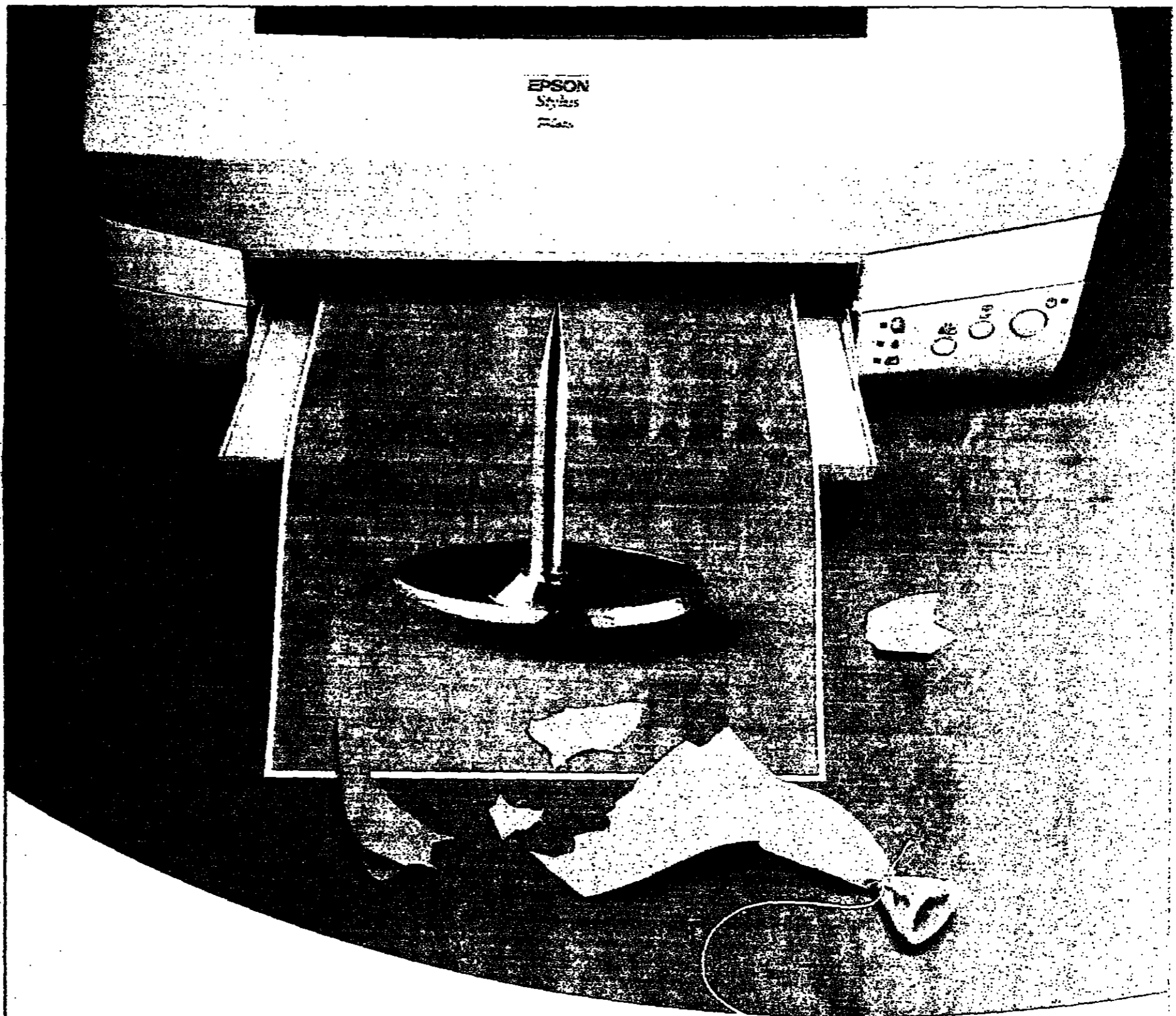
Ajay Patel, managing director, said: "We would like to point out that the views expressed by Iqbal Wajhab were entirely his own and in no way reflected the views of anyone else at *Tandoori*."

"We remain wholly apologetic for any offence Mr Wajhab's articles have caused our readers and hope that the good work that *Tandoori Magazine* has un-

dertaken over the last 3½ years for the curry restaurant community can carry on in the future."

In the magazine, which is mailed directly to 8,000 Indian restaurants, Mr Wajhab accused waiters of making dining out feel like going to a funeral and failing to make customers feel welcome. He later launched a damage limitation exercise, insisting he had been misinterpreted and taken out of context.

However, the move came too late to restore relations with his angry readers. Mr Wajhab has now had all his connections with *Tandoori Magazine* severed. His links with the trade will continue, however: he is expected to open his own restaurant in Kensington, West London, later this year. It will, no doubt, be staffed by happy, smiling waiters.



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# Measles vaccine's link with autism studied

Disease discovery offers hope for damaged babies, writes Ian Murray

A POSSIBLE link between autism and the multiple MMR vaccine is to be investigated by an independent panel set up by the Medical Research Council. The investigation has been agreed because of the publication in *The Lancet* today of a study among 12 autistic children who developed the condition soon after being given the vaccine against measles, mumps and rubella.

The authors of the report, from the Royal Free Hospital Medical School in Hampstead, North London, admit that their study does not prove there is a link. However, they say they have discovered a previously unknown bowel disease that can be caused by the measles virus, which in turn can cause autism.

All of the 13 researchers involved insist that measles vaccinations must continue but some, led by Andy Wakefield, reader in experimental gastroenterology who was in charge of the study, think that the combined MMR vaccine should be abandoned until research can prove it is safe. Instead he wants vaccinations to be given separately for each of the three illnesses over a year. "In all conscience I cannot support the idea of using all three vaccines together," he said yesterday.

Arie Zuckerman, dean of the medical school, disagreed: "If this were to precipitate a scare that reduced the rate of immunisation, children will start dying from measles." The study found that all 12 children were suffering from a new bowel infection similar to Crohn's disease and irritable bowel syndrome, and there was research that showed both of these conditions were caused by the measles virus. If the bowel is damaged during a critical period of brain growth then it may be unable to cope with the opiates formed in the intestine from foods such as milk and wheat. These opiates can then get into the brain where they may influence behaviour, stunt brain growth and development. The first symptoms of autism usually occur in a child's second year, at the same time MMR is normally given, so this may be a false association. "Nonetheless, we are concerned that MMR may give rise to this complication in a small number of children," the researchers say.

## INOCULATION GIVEN TO A MILLION BABIES A YEAR

A combined vaccination against measles, mumps and rubella — known as MMR — was introduced in Britain in October 1988, after being widely used for several years in America (Ian Murray writes). In September 1992, after research linked a cluster of cases of meningitis in Nottingham to batches of the mumps strain in the vaccination, products made by two of the three manufacturers, SmithKline Beecham and Merieux, were withdrawn. In 1994, these two manufacturers sup-

plied measles and rubella strains for a double vaccination programme, called Operation Safeguard, launched by the Government. Around seven million schoolchildren were vaccinated, of whom 530 were said to have suffered severe side effects. Since 1992 all the triple vaccines have been produced by Merck Sharp and Dohme, with around a million babies a year immunised in this way. MMR is routinely offered to children in their second year but can be given at any

time after this. Those who have not had it before can be given it at the same time as their pre-school diphtheria, tetanus and polio boosters. In 1995 the Royal Free Hospital published research in *The Lancet* linking the inflammatory stomach condition, Crohn's disease, to the vaccination. The publicity led to a two per cent drop in the number of children being immunised. Separate vaccinations against all three diseases have been available since the Second World War.



Jackie Fletcher with her son Robert: she believes vaccination caused autistic traits

# Mother leads campaign after illness of healthy son

By IAN MURRAY

IN November 1992, when Robert Fletcher was due to have his triple vaccination against measles, mumps and rubella his parents, John and Jackie, took him to the immunisation clinic without a second thought.

Both their elder sons, Andrew, now 15, and Stewart, 11, had been vaccinated only against measles and Mrs Fletcher thought it was convenient that Robert could be

immunised against three diseases at once.

"Robert was developing perfectly at the time," she said yesterday. "He was only 13 months old and beginning to speak. He could make all the noises of animals and would say 'All gone' very clearly when he had finished eating."

Ten days after Robert, now six, was given the vaccination he became very drowsy, then after a few hours he had a fit, became unconscious and his skin was covered in

blotches. Later he started roaring in pain and vomiting.

"We were told when he had the vaccination that might have a minor reaction after ten days but this was major," she said. "From then on his life changed. He has had untypical chest infections, convulsions and fits."

Robert forgot the few words he knew and though he learnt to walk he developed autistic traits which meant he was unable to understand what was going on around him. "A

consultant neurologist told us it was caused by the vaccine and we set out to find out as much as we could about it," she said.

During Robert's frequent visits to hospitals she said she met other parents who had similar experiences and came to the conclusion that the multiple vaccination could be responsible for "injuring" a small number of children.

In January, 1994, she called a public meeting to found JABS — Justice Awareness Basic Support —

for parents who believed their children were vaccine damaged. More than 150 families turned up and hundreds of others have joined since.

"We are not anti-vaccine but we are anti-damage," she said. "We think parents should understand that vaccines are not compulsory and they do have a choice."

For the past two years Richard Barr, of the King's Lynn solicitors Dawbarns, has been collecting cases from parents who claim their

children have been damaged by the vaccination. 1,377 families have been in touch with him and there are 477 active cases, although none have gone to court.

Mr Barr said the case for damages would be brought against the three manufacturers of the vaccine since 1988. SmithKline Beecham, Merieux and Merck Sharp and Dohme. JABS address is: 1, Gainsworth Road, Golborne, Warrington, Cheshire WA3 3RF.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Families of Britons in jail abroad conned

A "despicable" swindler who posed as a lawyer to milk thousands of pounds from the families and friends of Britons in prison abroad has been jailed for three years. Philip Cornish, 47, the administrative director of Fair Trials Abroad, assured his victims he would do all he could to help their loved ones. Instead he pocketed their cash in return for worthless advice or nothing at all. Snaresbrook Crown Court was told. One of those he preyed on was left so distraught he became suicidal. While supposedly working on clients' behalf Cornish often spent his time listening to sex chat lines and horse racing result services.

### TV star charged

John Alford, former star of *London's Burning*, has been charged with supplying cocaine and cannabis at London's Savoy Hotel last August. Alford, 26, of Hadley Wood, North London, will appear before Bow Street Magistrates on April 3.

### Police go private

Scotland Yard is planning to pay for injured officers to have private operations because of the high cost of sick leave while police are on NHS waiting lists. Metropolitan Police chiefs believe it would be cheaper to get the men back to work quickly.

### Fraud halted

A £57 million transatlantic fraud involving counterfeit bankers' drafts was smashed yesterday in a joint operation by City of London detectives and US Secret Service agents. Five suspects with dual American and Nigerian nationalities were arrested.

### Slim inheritance

Mothers who regularly go on strict diets pass the fasting habit on to their daughters, who often develop eating disorders, the *British Journal of Clinical Psychology* reports. Researchers from Leeds University interviewed 40 teenage schoolgirls.

### Singer wanted

Top Celtic rock band Runrig are advertising for a new lead singer in a Highland newspaper. Doonie Munro, who left the band after 14 years, unsuccessfully contested the Ross, Skye and Inverness West seat for Labour in May.

### Traveller's rest

Police fearing a clash between travelling families seized swords, knives, axes, bayonets, hunting sticks and farm tools before the funeral in Co Sligo of Martin McDonagh, a leading member of the travelling community, who died last week aged 79.

### Real Television

A report (Winner's dream job ends in a nightmare, February 13) stated that Nicky Mastrangeli had been bitten by a cobra and shot by a friend after winning a game show run by Real Television. We now understand that there was no truth in this story and accept that Real Television looked after Mr Mastrangeli fairly and properly. We regret any embarrassment caused.

### Rare Breeds

The Rare Breeds Survival Trust, a national charity, was not in any way involved in an Amersham, Buckinghamshire, court case (report, February 10) concerning alleged mistreatment of rare breeds of pigs, sheep and a cow.

# Bland digs in over Parliament coverage

By JAMES LANDALE AND RAYMOND SNODDY

SIR Christopher Bland, chairman of the BBC, last night clashed with Gerald Kaufman, chairman of the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee, over the future of parliamentary coverage on Radio 4.

Mr Kaufman had asked that no changes be made to BBC coverage — in particular a plan to move *Yesterday in Parliament* to long wave — until the select committee had completed its report into the future of broadcasting. Last night Sir Christopher wrote to Mr Kaufman, making clear that the BBC had no intention of giving such an undertaking. "I believe such an undertaking would seriously compromise the independence of the Board of Governors," he wrote.

The BBC made plain that it intended to go ahead with changes to the schedule on April 1, although it was in the consultation process. Sir Christopher told Mr Kaufman that the BBC planned to complete the consultation process by the middle of March. "At that point, it will be for the Governors of the BBC, as the Charter provides, to make the final decision," Sir Christopher added. Senior BBC



Sir Christopher refused to give pledge over plan

broadcast at 11am on Saturdays, will be moved to Thursday evening. A new programme called *Westminster Hour*, to be broadcast on Sunday evenings, will replace *In Committee*. Mr Kaufman said that the BBC appeared intent on "consigning this coverage to the ghetto of long wave radio". He said: "A considerable number of sets do not receive long wave, a considerable number of listeners are not able to receive long wave, and those that do receive it cannot do so in any quality."

Will Wyatt, chief executive of BBC Broadcasting, refused to agree to any delay and insisted that that was a decision for Mr Bland. He said the changes would enhance the Corporation's coverage of Parliament. He said *Yesterday in Parliament* would be extended to 23 minutes, that the *Week in Westminster* will be expanded to go out 52 weeks a year, and that the changes included 55 hours more parliamentary broadcasting a year on Radio 4, which would remain a place of intelligent and engaging speech.

Media, pages 40-43

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Producer: Mike Robinson  
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BBC News - Journalism you can trust

# Potatoes could combat cholera

FISH and chips may one day give way to chips with vaccines, with the announcement by American scientists that they have produced potatoes that protect against cholera.

In future, the potatoes could control the disease in areas of the world where it is common. A vaccine against cholera exists but is of limited effectiveness, giving only short-term protection. Cholera is spread by contaminated food or drinking water, infects five million people every year, and kills 200,000 of them. The disease is extremely rare in Britain, but remains common in Asia and Africa.

Dr William Langridge and colleagues from Loma Linda University in California have

Using genetic engineering, US scientists have produced a vaccine in a food. Nigel Hawkes reports

produced the potato vaccine by genetic engineering. They isolated the gene responsible for producing part of the cholera toxin, called CTB, which is itself harmless but has been shown to stimulate an immune response against cholera.

They inserted the gene into the potato gene, and showed that the potatoes produced CTB. When mice were fed on the transgenic potatoes, they developed antibodies to the toxin. In test-tubes, these anti-

bodies neutralised the cholera toxin, while in the mice themselves there was a reduction of up to 60 per cent in diarrheal fluid accumulation in the small intestine — evidence of a degree of effectiveness.

A practical human vaccine would have to be more complex, the team say in *Nature Biotechnology*, as it would have to immunise against infection by the cholera bacterium as well as against the effects of the toxin it produces. But they believe that it would

be quite possible. While the mice ate the potatoes raw, the effect should persist in cooked potatoes, they say. They boiled potatoes and found that after boiling they still contained CTB in an intact form. They did not try frying.

The beauty of food-based vaccines is that they can be used to provide regular "booster" shots of the vaccine. Other disease may also be prevented in the same way, the team believe, saying that the new results "move us closer to achievement of a low-cost, convenient, effective, and safe strategy for the prevention of disease, especially in regions of the world where conventional vaccines are unavailable."

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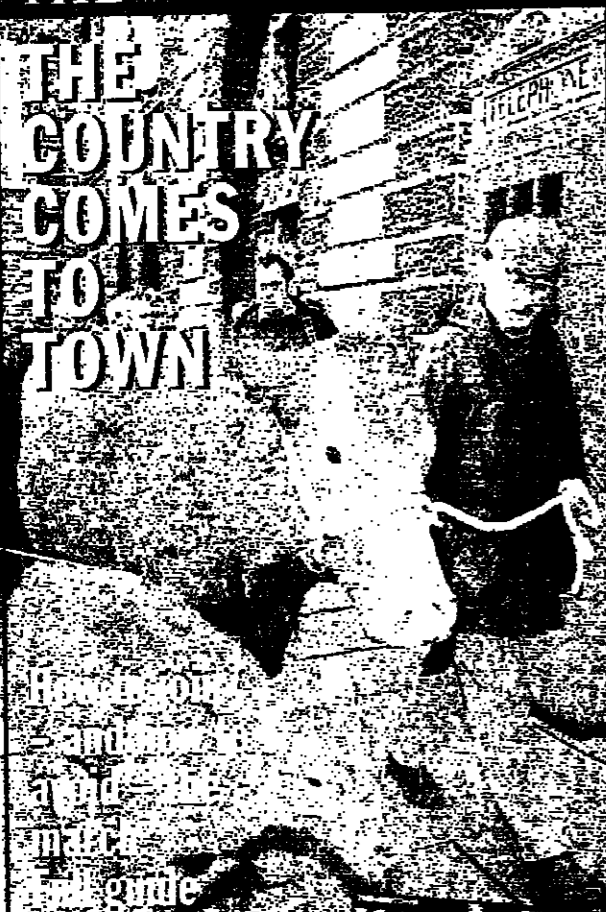
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### TOMORROW IN THE SATURDAY TIMES



and in metro, Matt Damon, Hollywood's latest boy wonder

## Princess to stay in hospital for rest of the week

By Alan Hamilton and Matthew Barbour

PRINCESS Margaret will remain in hospital until next week for tests after suffering a stroke in the Caribbean.

Buckingham Palace said yesterday that the Princess, 67, continued to make steady progress, and was resting in the King Edward VII Hospital for Officers in Marylebone, Central London. There would be no further bulletins on her condition this week.

A team of doctors led by Richard Thompson, the Queen's physician and a consultant at St Thomas's Hospital, London, will attempt to

find the cause of the Princess's stroke, discover what damage it caused, and watch for signs of a second attack. Although the first stroke was said to be mild, there is a slightly increased chance of a second stroke within the first year.

Tests will include a brain scan by magnetic resonance imaging, which can show the source of the stroke and any damage caused. An ultrasound scan of the blood vessels in the neck will show whether there has been any damage there, and if the carotid artery has been nar-

rowed, an operation may be considered.

Kennedy Lees, director of the acute stroke unit at the Western Infirmary, Glasgow, said: "Doctors will not start treatment for high blood pressure in the first two or three days after a stroke because it reduces blood flow to the damaged area, and this could cause more damage. They are likely to wait a few days, then introduce treatment gradually." If there was a danger of clotting, the Princess would be put on blood-thinning drugs, and advised to avoid cigarettes and excess alcohol. She might also be given physiotherapy. Dr Lees said. Full recovery from a mild stroke would take weeks, he added.

The Princess was dining with friends on Mustique on Monday when she complained of dizziness, chest pains and a headache. She was examined by a local doctor, and flown by air ambulance on Tuesday to a private hospital in Bridgetown, Barbados. Early yesterday she arrived at Gatwick after an eight-hour flight on a British Airways Boeing 747 scheduled flight. She was accompanied by a cardiologist and a nurse.

### PRINCE PRESSES FOR CIDER LICENCE

THE Prince of Wales has applied to open an office at his Highgrove estate so that he can sell his own brand of cider (Simon de Brunelles writes). "Old-fashioned Sussex cider", sold under the name Duchy Originals, is produced under licence by Merrydown, one of the country's largest commercial cider makers. Its only connection with the Duchy of Cornwall estates is the name: even the apples

come from orchards in Kent and Sussex.

If magistrates in Cirencester grant the application next month, the cider will go on sale in the estate shop at Highgrove. It sells Duchy biscuits, tea, chocolates, jams and other preserves, wild flower seeds from the organic garden, table mats and coasters featuring the Prince's own watercolour paintings. A litre of the cider will cost £2.65.



Princess Margaret arriving at the King Edward VII Hospital in London yesterday

## Train driver 'ignored two warnings before crash'

By Joanna Bale

A TRAIN driver ignored two warning signals, causing a collision with a train near Watford Junction, a court was told yesterday. One passenger died in the crash.

Peter Afford was charged with manslaughter after the crash in which Ruth Holland, a 54-year-old journalist from Apsley, Hertfordshire, was killed and 70 passengers injured. Mr Afford later said that he had been under pressure to reach Watford Junction on time, but did not remember seeing yellow lights warning him to slow down to enable an oncoming train to cross the tracks.

slammed on the brakes. Mr Escott-Cox said: "But the die was already cast. He was going too fast so that with the best will and the quickest reactions in the world, putting his brakes on then was too late."

As the two trains were about to collide almost head on, Mr Afford threw himself to the righthand side of his cab to avoid the impact on the left-hand side. The driver of the other train applied the brakes then left his cab to run back through his train. Both were injured, but are now recovered.

Michael Farrelly, the con-

Brian Escott-Cox, QC, for the prosecution, told Luton Crown Court: "Our case is that the accident was caused by the accused. We say that he wilfully - that is to say deliberately - chose to ignore a signal or signals and took the risk quite deliberately that everything would be all right. It wasn't."

Mr Escott-Cox said that Mr Afford, 57, had many years' experience and was very familiar with the route from Euston to Watford Junction. His train was carrying 190 passengers when the accident happened in August 1996.

A decision had been made to divert a late-running empty train, which meant that it had to cross the path of Mr Afford's train. As he approached Watford Junction, he passed two yellow warning lights - a double yellow, then a more urgent single yellow, warning him to slow down.

The court was told that there is an advanced warning system that makes the safety lights "infallible". Each signal is accompanied by a loud buzzer that the driver has to switch off otherwise the brakes come on automatically, and a warning disc that flashes yellow.

Mr Escott-Cox said: "He was actually accelerating from 60mph to 68mph and must have been doing so as he went through that single yellow light. He could not have failed to see the light."

When Mr Afford saw a red light, the court was told, he



Afford yesterday, said he was under pressure

ductor on Mr Afford's train, told the court how he looked out of the window of his rear cab and saw the other train approaching moments before the impact. He said: "It seemed like forever waiting for this to happen. I hung on with one hand to a rail and the next thing I knew there was a terrific explosion and a searing pain in my head. I found myself lying on the floor. It was so quiet, like being in church, deadly quiet. I got up, opened the door to the passenger compartment and said, 'Take it easy, everything is going to be OK'. But I knew in my heart that it wasn't OK." The hearing continues.

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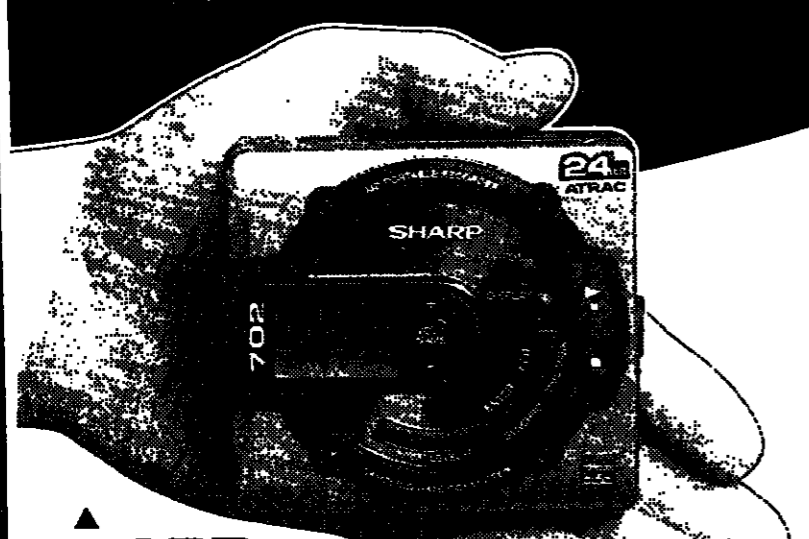
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# Commodore given life for sailing rope murder

Russell Jenkins on how husband plotted to get rid of unfaithful wife

A FORMER commodore of Southport Sailing Club was jailed for life yesterday for strangling his unfaithful wife to death because he believed that she had become a social embarrassment.

Paul Longworth, 38, looked shocked and mouthed "I didn't do it" as the jury at Liverpool Crown Court delivered the verdict that he murdered his wife Tina, 29, in January last year. He had strangled her with a length of sailing rope as their two young children slept, then strung her body from the banisters to make it look as though she had committed suicide.

He carefully placed framed portraits of his children — Abby, then 6, and Matthew, 4 — by her feet and left for the sailing club to establish his alibi by buying everyone drinks, apparently to celebrate his birthday.

The jury took nearly four hours to reach its verdict at the end of a four-week trial. Mr Justice Hadden told Longworth, who had denied mur-



The club where Mrs Longworth began an affair

der: "You snuffed out the life of your wife entirely for your own selfish reasons without any regard for those two children who were hers and yours. You passed yourself off as a good father but your taking away from them of their mother was a callous, violent and wicked act which has caused them a dreadful loss."

Detectives' suspicions were roused by the presence of two ligature marks around Mrs

Longworth's neck and 36 separate injuries to her body. They were inconsistent with the story given by Longworth, an ophthalmic technician who worked in Southport.

Southport Sailing Club, a single-storey building by the resort's Marine Lake, was the place where Mrs Longworth started the affair that led to her death. When her husband introduced her to the club, she preferred to sit in the car and watch him sail rather than

take part. But she quickly grew in confidence and began sailing and socialising on her own, going out with club members, helping out behind the bar and attending club functions with friends from the playgroup where she worked. "I don't think Paul was particularly happy when she started going out socially alone. He would say 'she's useless' and that sort of thing, as if it made him feel insecure," said Sandra Ashcroft, the club's bar secretary and a friend of Mrs Longworth.

In June 1996 Mrs Longworth began an affair with Gary Silcock, a married firefighter, and the club's flag officer and rear commodore. The two were still having the affair at the time Mrs Longworth was killed. The pair had started as friends, bumping into each other in the clubhouse and confiding in each other their marital problems.

They had secret trysts at pubs in the Southport area, or met in deserted places, mak-



Tina Longworth was murdered by her husband Paul because he believed she was a social embarrassment



ing love on the back seat of Mr Silcock's car.

The two were together just the day before her death. Longworth was aware of the rumours, but he and Mr Silcock remained sailing partners. Just two days before Mrs Longworth's death, he and Mr Silcock spent the day looking

at boats. But Longworth knew something was wrong, and asked other club members about the rumours. Mrs Ashcroft said that he had asked her whether his wife was having an affair with Mr Silcock. She had told him they were not, "for obvious reasons". But in December 1996

Longworth let slip his desire to be rid of his wife. He was at the bar while his wife was competing in one of the club's regular weekend competitions on the lake outside.

Jane Johnson told the court that she remembered watching the race from the club house and telling Longworth

that the competitors "must be mad" to go sailing on such a cold day. At one point in the race, Mrs Longworth's dinghy capsized. Mrs Johnson said: "Paul said 'It's just a shame she is coming up'. The then commodore said to him 'You don't mean that', and he replied 'I do'."

## Shop offers job to make you roll in the aisles

By Emma Wilkins

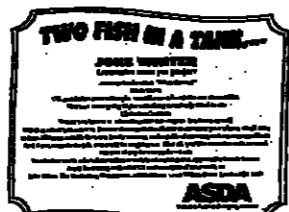
THE supermarket chain Asda has embarked on what many will regard as an impossible task... it has decided to improve the standard of Christmas cracker jokes by advertising in *The Stage* for a new joke writer.

The comic's task will include beating such classics as "What's musical and handy in a supermarket? A Chopin List!"

"It's a standing joke that Christmas crackers never contain jokes that are funny," said Asda buyer Craig Ryder. "We decided it was about time to banish groans and moans from the Christmas dinner table and scotch the myth that there's no such thing as a side-splitting cracker gag."

The advertisement asks the prospective writer for 100 examples of their work which are "suitable for every family member and capable of amusing without causing offence". The fees, which are not disclosed, are advertised as "excellent".

Fewer than 500 jokes are used in the 170 million crackers sold in Britain every year so it is hardly surprising that many of them are well-known



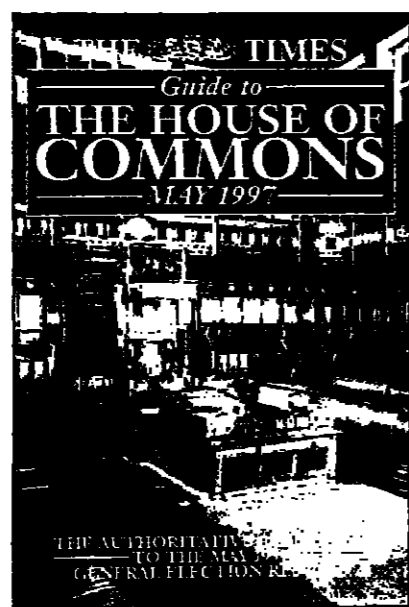
Wanted: cracker writer:

favourites such as: "Why did the tomato blush? Because it saw the salad dressing". Or "A ghost walks into a pub and asks for a whisky. The barman says, 'Sorry, we don't serve spirits'. Or "What do you call a sheep with a ribbon tied round its Ram-bow?"

Once the applications are received, Asda will interview a shortlist of candidates. The final choice of joke writer will be made after a panel of shoppers has listened to a sample of their work.

Some of the current jokes have been around for decades, but no one knows exactly how long, according to Liz Burgess, Asda spokeswoman. "Some of the jokes are probably older than Bob Monkhouse. The odd new one goes in each year but no one really knows who wrote the old ones or how old they are," she said.

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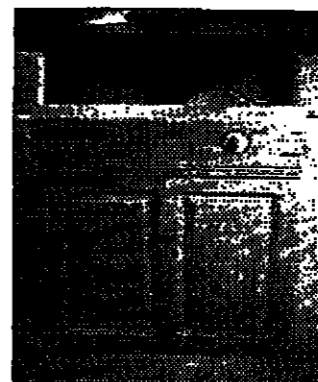
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# Old King Coal makes comeback in Welsh valleys

BY SIMON DE BRUXELLES

MINERS who bought their pit to save it from closure yesterday announced plans to open Wales's first new deep coal mine in more than 30 years. An investment of £25 million in the new pit will create 300 jobs.

It is the latest development in the success story of the 275 miners who turned the Tower Colliery at Hirwaun in the South Wales valleys into a "gold mine". The miners have joined forces with one of the country's biggest coal companies to develop the new colliery at Margam, near Port Talbot. It has coal reserves for nearly 50 years.

Tyrone O'Sullivan, Tower's chairman, said yesterday: "This is the second chapter in the fightback for King Coal. The first was us making a success of Tower Colliery. Now we are expanding and creating more jobs. I'm thrilled that we are cooking a snook at everyone who thought the mining industry in South Wales was down and



O'Sullivan: continuing the fightback for coal

out." Tower Colliery was the last deep coal mine left in South Wales after a series of closures saw 32,000 mining jobs disappear in 10 years. It has been a success story since the workers used their £8,000-a-head redundancy money to buy the pit from British Coal three years ago.

The miners made a £2 million profit in their first year of operation and £4.3 million the following year on a turnover of £22 million. They earn

about £25,000 a year and were able to pay themselves bonuses of £1,500.

There are 27 million tonnes of coal in the new deep mine. Production is likely to start by 2003 in the joint development with Celtic Energy, which already runs a neighbouring opencast site.

British Coal planned to develop a "superpit" at the site in the 1980s, but the plan never left the drawing-board because of the turmoil in the industry. Mr O'Sullivan said: "We feel confident enough in the future of mining in South Wales to take a stake in the new mine. After all the doom and gloom of the British Coal years, we believe that the coal industry has a bright future."

Dale Hart, Celtic Energy's chief executive, said: "We are delighted to work with Tower to open up the first deep mine in Wales for 20 years. The two companies are carrying South Wales coal into the next millennium. The coal is top quality and will be able to compete with the rest of the world without subsidies."



Tapping a rich vein: the miners who bought Tower Colliery have been able to pay themselves a £1,500 bonus

## Children banking on their accounts

BY EMMA WILKINS

TWO THIRDS of all British children now have their own bank or building society accounts, according to a survey of 1,100 youngsters by the Childwise charity.

Junior accounts are usually started by parents but it is not long before they are maintained by children with pocket money and cash from part-time jobs such as babysitting and paper rounds.

More than 30 per cent of 5 to 6-year-olds have accounts, rising to a little over 50 per cent in the 7 to 8 age group and 60 per cent of those aged 9 to 10 years. In the groups aged 11 and over the figure is fairly consistent at between 82 and 84 per cent.

The main purchases among children aged between 5 and 16 - who spend £13.40 per week on average - are sweets, crisps, soft drinks, magazines and comics.

## Road protests ignore God, says Carey

BY RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

THE Archbishop of Canterbury spoke out yesterday against road protesters who worship nature at the expense of the needs of local communities.

Dr George Carey, who frequently travels along some of the worst roads in the country, such as the A2 from London to Canterbury, said humans were the pinnacle of God's creation. He quoted Genesis, where God commanded Adam and Eve to be fruitful, multiply and have dominion "over every living thing that creeps upon the earth".

Delivering the first of six Lenten meditations at Canterbury Cathedral, Dr Carey described the results of failing to acknowledge God's role in the Universe. "Two characteristic human attitudes to the natural can ensue and have, devastatingly, in this century," he said. "One is to exploit the world's resources ruthlessly. The other is to worship the natural world."

He continued: "This latter is harder to describe, because its effects are not so immediately obvious. It can sometimes be seen when a marked imbalance develops, such that a human life is seen as of less importance than that of an animal. Or our anxiety about the countryside leads us to oppose all new buildings or new roads, even when they are not a needless luxury but a necessity to a community."

He said these required "difficult and sensitive" judgments that could not be made successfully if it was not recognised that God was the creator of the world. "Creation is therefore for God, and for humanity only under God," he said. "We are the pinnacle of God's creation, but not its centre."

### THE A2

The Archbishop of Canterbury's route into London from his diocese is peppered with congestion blackspots, especially as the overcrowded A2 enters the capital. Roadworks to widen the M2 through north Kent have added to delays. Dr George Carey's frequent journeys to Heathrow for foreign assignments are also blighted. Ministers last year deferred a final decision on whether to widen all of the M25 to eight lanes, although the controversial scheme is now highly unlikely to receive the go-ahead.

Dr Carey said it was a mistaken interpretation of the Bible for people to assume they have total dominion over nature. "Humility is required by us all as we face the extermination of many thousand of species in our day whose demise is linked to our dominance of nature," he said.

## Fun death irks Archers fans

BY RUTH GLEDHILL

FANS of *The Archers* still reeling from the sudden death of John Archer were shocked to hear the storyline described as "fun" yesterday by Vanessa Whitburn, the programme's editor.

Ms Whitburn, who joined the Pebble Mill team at Birmingham eight years ago, said that the plot to end the life of the farmer's son by having him crushed to death beneath a vintage Ferguson tractor was dreamt up after Sam Barriscale, the actor who plays John Archer, decided to leave. "We decided to have fun and put him out with a big story," she said on the *Today* programme.

Scores of Archers fans telephoned the BBC yesterday, some to protest about the plot and others to praise it. Heddi Niklaus, who plays pub landlady Cathy Perks and who is also the managing director of the Archers Addicts fan club, said that to describe the storyline as "fun" had been inappropriate. But she added: "She was trying to co-ordinate all the different interests and come up with a cracking storyline, which is what she has done." Jocelyn Hay, of the *Voice of*



Whitburn: said her team had decided to have fun

the Listener and Viewer, said: "I can understand them trying to hit the headlines with something that will cause a stir. But obviously, any kind of death is not a question of fun. I am sure it was just a slip of the tongue." A BBC spokeswoman said: "Vanessa was not implying that we were having a bit of fun with death. She used this expression in terms of developing the storyline and giving it dramatic impact. Of course she would never suggest there was any fun involved in a character dying."



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# Circus tiger's victim bites back

Keeper who lost his lower arm to Chipperfields animal keeps up flow of jokes from his hospital bed.

Helen Johnstone reports

AS RAJAH, the Bengal tiger that ate half of a keeper's left arm, posed haughtily for pictures at the Chipperfield winter quarters in Oxfordshire yesterday, his victim was talking about murder.

Having eaten a hearty breakfast of Westabix, Nigel Wesson, 32, told friends he could murder a pint of lager. His main thought as he recovered from an emergency operation at the John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford, was for the Chipperfield family. He apologised for the trouble he caused them when his arm was bitten off after he put it in the tiger's cage.

His father David arrived from Teesside at lunchtime and, as he waited for the visit, the keeper told friends of his regrets. One who visited him in hospital soon after the attack said: "He was calm but in good spirits. He had just had his breakfast and said he could murder a pint of lager. He said he was sorry for all the hassle he had caused."

Nick Gray, a Yorkshire TV producer who is making a fly-on-the-wall documentary on the John Radcliffe Hospital's critical care department, filmed Mr Wesson's arrival at the hospital and was one of the first people to speak to him.

"We had been told someone was coming in who had been mauled by a tiger," Mr Gray said. "Our film was running as he arrived and he was joking about being allergic to tigers. His arm was bandaged

up but he said the bottom of it had been bitten off. He was in a lot of pain."

Mr Gray said Mr Wesson's arm was later amputated above the elbow. "I asked him what hurt and he told me 'my fingers do'. It is a terrible loss for him because he is left-handed. I found him a very nice man. He's a very plucky guy, the way he is handling it."

Mr Wesson was still joking yesterday, telling friends he would be looking for an office job in future.

Trauma surgeon Philip Wilde said Mr Wesson's arm was so seriously mauled it had not been possible to salvage his elbow and his arm had had to be amputated above the joint.

Mr Wilde said Mr Wesson would require further surgery today to stitch up the wound if there was no sign of infection. "This is normal in this kind of trauma amputation. If there is no infection it will be stitched up and if not it will be delayed."

Mr Wilde, whose colleague Peter Worlock carried out the emergency operation, said he anticipated a long physical and psychological recovery period.

"I saw him at lunchtime and he was in a lot of pain. He had not had time to reflect on what happened."

Meanwhile, the Chipperfield family were defending their safety record as full details emerged of the second



Rajah in winter quarters yesterday. A Chipperfield family member said: "The tiger thought he was playing"

serious mauling involving the family in two months. Michael Tunnicliffe, husband of Anne Chipperfield, blamed human error.

He said Mr Wesson, an experienced keeper, had departed from normal safety procedure when he was putting four-year-old Rajah into his night quarters. "We normally use a hook to open

the partition. Nigel used his hand and arm and the tiger caught it. He just lost his concentration for a moment. It happened in seconds. A tiger's reactions are so fast it can catch a bird in flight."

Mr Tunnicliffe said the tiger would not be put down and was due to go to Europe soon to perform in a circus. "He does a regular act. He worked

in France last season and will be going to Belgium soon. "We will be carrying on as normal. He does not know he did anything wrong. The tiger thought he was playing. Their play is much rougher than ours. They pick each other up by the scruff of the neck and throw each other about and think it is highly amusing."

His family had bred Rajah, he added, "and the tiger had a good nature. But never forget they are wild animals."

Mr Tunnicliffe said Richard Chipperfield and his wife were still in Florida where their 24-year-old son Richard is recovering from a tiger attack six weeks ago. He added: "The family are very upset and heartbroken that this should also have happened."

## Great apes at risk of extinction as loggers move in

By Nick Nuttall

THE great apes are being pushed towards extinction by uncontrolled logging in Africa, conservationists said yesterday.

The logging is allowing hunters to slaughter large numbers of chimpanzees and gorillas for meat.

Wildlife campaigners, including Jane Goodall, the British expert on apes, yesterday called on logging firms to back tough new codes to stamp out commercial-scale bushmeat operations in Central and West Africa. "Unless we work together to change attitudes there will be no viable populations of great apes in the wild within 50 years," Dr Goodall said yesterday.

The Ape Alliance, drawn from groups including the Born Free Foundation and the World Society for the Protection of Animals, claims the growing bushmeat trade also threatens scores of other species such as the forest elephant.

The rapidly growing timber industry has destroyed ape habitat and opened up their last refuges to commercial hunting. In Gabon it has been estimated that 20,000 chimpanzees have been wiped out as a result.

The alliance is urging a code of conduct on bushmeat, including logging firms pledging to supply enough protein in workers' diets so they no longer need to hunt apes.

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## Journalist in Chilean death mystery was 'secret agent'

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

A BRITISH defence journalist and former RAF pilot, who was found suffocated in an hotel room in Chile in 1990, was working as a freelance agent for the Secret Intelligence Service investigating illegal arms sales to Iraq, a new book claims.

Jonathan Moyle, 28, who was editor of *Defence Helicopter World* when he died while on a visit to an arms fair in Santiago, the Chilean capital, had agreed to supply information to MI6 as part of a covert mission code-named Operation Valkyrie, according to the book, which is dedicated to the journalist and to his parents, Tony and Diana Moyle.

Mr Moyle, on whom an inquest is to be reopened at Exmouth Magistrates' Court today, was working on a story about the alleged conversion of civilian Bell helicopters into military aircraft for sale to Iraq. His death, recorded as murder by a Chilean investigating judge, occurred on March 31, 1990, four months before Saddam Hussein's troops invaded Kuwait.

The book's author, Wensley Clarkson, spent several months in Chile investigating the background to the killing, including the suggestion that a Chilean arms manufacturer was behind the plot to sell the converted Bell helicopters to Baghdad in breach of the international arms embargo that had been imposed during the eight-year Iraq/Iraq war.

Mr Clarkson, 41, who arranged for his dossier to be passed to the coroner at Exeter, points the finger of blame for the journalist's death at a senior employee of the Chilean arms company who had links with Iraq. The employee, alleged to have contracted assassins to kill Mr Moyle has since died of cancer.

The *Valkyrie Operation*, published by Blake, alleges Mr Moyle was murdered in his hotel room in Santiago because he was about to expose a £300 million arms deal with Iraq.

The American Bell helicopter manufacturer was not involved in the reported conversion of the civilian aircraft into a military one. Coincidentally, British intelligence sources disclosed last week, during the height of the current Iraq crisis, that Iraqi agents were scouring world markets for advanced helicopter crop-sprayers as a delivery system for nerve gas and anthrax weapons.

Mr Clarkson claims that Mr Moyle had been recruited by MI6 officers to help to gather intelligence about illegal arms sales to Iraq. The British inquest was opened and adjourned in 1990. It was later resumed and adjourned again. Today's inquest is expected to review all the latest evidence surrounding Mr Moyle's death.



Moyle: investigating arms sales to Iraq

## Missile buyer plans to launch museum

By ROBIN YOUNG

AN airfield owner yesterday paid £9,340 for what an art expert described as "the ultimate in garden statuary" — a Bloodhound Mk 2 surface-to-air guided missile.

David Copley got the weapon, which has been dismantled, as a sale of Ministry of Defence surplus aircraft and engines in London after Roger Holles, the managing director of the auctioneers, Phillips, told a crowded room of potential bidders: "This could be just the thing if you are in a dispute with your neighbour, to show that

you intend to escalate matters."

The Sam missile, which, with its launcher, weighs six tonnes, was originally deployed for the defence of bases in eastern England. More recently it has served, deactivated, as gate guardian at RAF North Luffenham, Rutland.

Mr Copley, who is chairman of Imperial Aviation Group, owns two airfields. One of them, at Grimby, was formerly a Bloodhound missile site, where he intends to open a museum.

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# Why football's biggest spenders are the fans

Supporters are paying up to £1,300 a season to follow top clubs, reports Richard Duce



Arms and a leg: the cost of supporting any of the leading 20 sides in football now far outstrips the price of watching other spectator sports, such as cricket or rugby

FOOTBALL, the "people's game", is now more expensive for many fans than membership of a golf club.

A survey for the FA Premier League shows that fans following top clubs such as Manchester United spend £1,300 a season watching their heroes, while the price of joining a home counties golf club is about £1,000.

The cost of supporting the top 20 sides now far outstrips the price of watching other spectator sports such as rugby and cricket. Season tickets for Bath, one of the most successful rugby clubs in England, start at £135 while the price of watching Essex at cricket next season is just £72 for the year. The average cost of a Premiership season ticket is £295, but both Tottenham and Chelsea charge more

than £400. The cost of travel, food and official merchandising brings the average cost to £758. An annual seven-day season ticket at the Belfry course near Birmingham starts at £645, rising to £995. Even membership of the Reform Club in London comes in cheaper at £678.

The research, carried out at the Sir Norman Chester

Centre for Football Research at Leicester University, shows that last season followers of Manchester United were the biggest spenders, shelling out £1,374. Chelsea supporters ran them a close second, spending £1,144.

Newcastle United supporters are the biggest buyers of club merchandise. Almost 75 per cent of their season ticket-

holders bought an adult replica shirt last season and fewer than 5 per cent of their fans spent nothing on official merchandise. Average spending by their season ticket-holders on merchandise was the highest in the country at £159, slightly more than the joining fee at the Groucho Club in London.

The survey, which mainly

involved season ticket-holders and attracted 28,122 replies from supporters of the 20 Premiership clubs and Glasgow Rangers, showed that fans are spending 28 per cent more on merchandise than two years ago. But only 5 per cent of respondents said they were opposed to clubs' merchandising policies or believed fans were being exploit-

ed. Other findings were:   
□ About 80 per cent of fans use some sort of private transport to home matches. Only 7 per cent walk or cycle to games. More than half of supporters who live within five miles of the stadium use their car on match days.   
□ About 33 per cent of all fans like to meet in a pub on match days. In Newcastle that figure

rises to 55 per cent.   
□ Half the sample like to be in the stadium up to 15 minutes before the kick-off. Fans in the North and North East want to arrive latest. Chelsea, Tottenham and Wimbledon fans are most likely to be seated more than half an hour before kick off.

Football, page 51

## SCOTS VOTE

An increasing number of Premiership club supporters favour the inclusion of Scottish clubs, according to a survey published yesterday.

The FA Premier League national fans survey interviewed nearly 30,000 people across the country and found 45 per cent were in favour of introducing clubs from north of the Border with 10 per cent undecided. The survey also found that 84 per cent of Glasgow Rangers supporters wanted their club to join the English league after years of almost total domination of the Scottish league.

Despite the growing support for the move, Peter Leaver, chief executive of the FA Premier League, believes, however, that the likelihood of fans getting their wish is very small. "Speaking with club chairmen I would say the opposition is total. This is a domestic league and at present I am totally against it."

## First cup makes club comeback

THE earliest known football trophy has been bought back by the club that won it 131 years ago, then lost it.

The Thomas Youdan Cup, a solid silver, gold-lined claret jug, came up at an antiques sale in London, where it was bought by a dealer from Scotland. Hallam FC of Sheffield subsequently paid £2,000 to recover the trophy.

Tony Scanlan, chairman of Hallam, founded in 1860, said: "Club history told us the Youdan Cup was older than the original FA Cup, which was stolen and melted down in 1895. We just didn't know where our cup was."

David Dynch, a dealer from Dunkeld in Perthshire, spotted the Youdan Cup at a trade sale last autumn. He said: "It was offered as simply a claret jug. I don't deal much in silverware and know precious little about football, except that Celtic were founded in 1888."

"The date 1867 had to be significant, so I bought the jug and contacted Hallam. They were delighted and not a little surprised. I have the special satisfaction of putting such a piece back in its proper place." Alan Cooper, president of Hallam, who play in the Northern Counties East league, said: "There's a vague theory that a prewar club



The Youdan Cup

official who left after disagreements took club papers and might have taken the cup as well. Two generations of officials can't recall seeing the cup or where it was thought to be. We're very lucky to have it back.

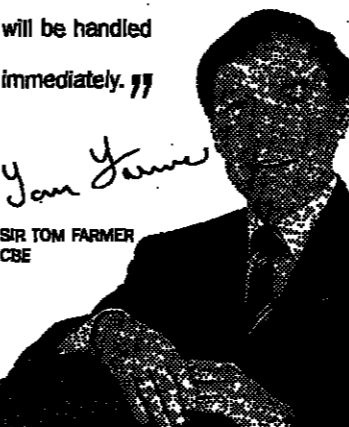
Hallam is the second oldest football club. The first, Sheffield FC, had been in existence for ten years when Thomas Youdan, a Sheffield theatre impresario, put up a trophy for 12 emerging clubs tired of friendly matches, known as challenges. In the final on March 5, 1867, Hallam beat Norfolk FC on near misses after a 0-0 draw to win the Youdan Cup. The match was played at Bramall Lane cricket ground.

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# VSO blames 'me generation' for fall in volunteers

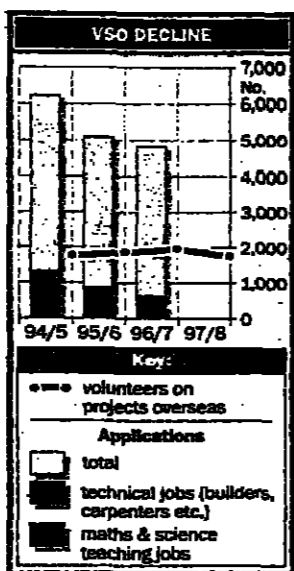
By Mark Henderson and Matthew Barbour

SELFISH attitudes and ignorance of other societies are blamed for a fall in the numbers volunteering for development work in the Third World.

Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) said yesterday that applications for places on its schemes have gone down by 22 per cent over the past two years, despite a doubling of spending on advertising. This year the charity will send 10 per cent fewer volunteers abroad than in 1997, the first time in ten years that the number has fallen.

People with specialised skills are volunteering in even smaller numbers, with applications for technical jobs in building or engineering down 51 per cent and for science and mathematics teaching posts down 48 per cent over two years. Even English-language teaching jobs, a recent growth area, are proving harder to fill with applications falling by 34 per cent in the past 12 months.

The VSO report reinforces research published last month by the Institute for Volunteering Work, which disclosed that the proportion of 18 to 24-year-olds doing voluntary work had fallen by 12 per cent since 1991. The average age of



to concentrate on "dumbed down" reports about wars and animals had lessened interest in development issues, he suggested.

"There is less coverage of the developing world overall and the message is either about lions and tigers, people in conflict or struggling to cope with disaster. It doesn't really cover everyday issues facing developing countries."

[TV showed just one peak-time documentary filmed in the developing world last year that was not about wildlife, the report said.]

VSO, which celebrates its fortieth anniversary this year, initially offered work in the Third World to gap year students and school-leavers but now takes only skilled applicants. The average age of its volunteers has been rising steadily since the late 1970s.

A healthy British economy, higher starting salaries for graduates and strong domestic demand for skilled employees were also making voluntary work less attractive, the report said. Controversies about the National Lottery had also led to scepticism about the goals of charities, and people were becoming more likely to give money rather than time to charitable projects, hitting volunteer-led schemes such as VSO.

David Green, director of VSO, said that the volunteer shortage would have real and damaging effects on communities in Africa, Asia and South America. "One hundred fewer volunteers means families won't have access to water, children won't be taught English and vital building and community development will remain untouched."

The charity is now planning to raise its public profile — a poll showed that 90 per cent of 15 to 25-year-olds had not heard of it — and attract more applicants.

It will offer subsidised courses in teaching English as a foreign language and flexible overseas placements.

a VSO volunteer is now 34. The broadcaster Jonathan Dimbleby, who sits on the VSO council, said: "For all Tony Blair's talk of a 'caring sharing society', there are many signs that people have become more selfish and less caring. People appear to be less concerned about the outside world than they used to be." Falling media coverage of the Third World and a tenden-

## A LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE

JON SNOW, presenter of Channel 4 News, who went to Uganda in 1967, aged 18, to teach at a secondary school 50 miles from the capital, feels that young people now do not know what they are missing.

"I was completely transformed by VSO," he said. "When you go out to a foreign country such as that you really discover what you have to offer. VSO transforms your sense of the world."

"I'd never been abroad before that, and it was a real adventure. All you have to do now, if you want to go abroad is work for ten weeks in a pub. All I know is that I'd rather be



stuck on a raft with someone who's done VSO than someone who hasn't."

Other past volunteers include Alastair Goodlad, opposition development spokesman, and the Labour MP Hilary Armstrong. Nowadays VSO asks for applicants with specialist skills. **VSO, 317 Putney Bridge, London SW15. Tel: 0181 780 7200.**

Leading article, page 24



Dawn Saunders raised nearly £1,000 for a charity by stripping at a nightclub

## Charity defends a peel by mother for £1,000

By Simon de Bruxelles

A CHARITY yesterday defended a decision to allow a 36-year-old mother of three to raise money by stripping in a nightclub.

Dawn Saunders made nearly £1,000 for the leukaemia group and intends to continue stripping until she has raised £20,000. Snowie Parsons, chairwoman of the Musgrove Leukaemic Group, which supports a 12-bed leukaemia ward at the Musgrove Park Hospital in Taunton, was the only representative of the charity present when Mrs Saunders bared all on the dancefloor of Toff's nightclub in Bridgwater, Somerset, on Wednesday night.

She admitted that the group did have reservations when Mrs Saunders made her fundraising suggestion. She said: "I'm the only one from the group who went: the others were a bit reluctant and made their excuses. But Dawn was willing to get up on stage and do this for us so it was only fair that I turned up to watch her."

"We have had people raising money for us in all sorts of ways, but no one has ever stripped for us before. We always need funds and will accept money from anyone as long as it's legal. Before deciding to accept it the committee members discussed it with Dawn and we agreed that as long as it was not done in a tacky or embarrassing way we had no problem with it."

Mrs Saunders, who lives in Bridgwater with her 68-year-old husband and children aged 10, 7, and 18 months, said she has never taken her clothes off in public before, persuaded the crowd of more than 80 to pay £3.50 each for her striptease, which she did twice in the evening. More money was raised by donations. Afterwards she said: "No one would pay to watch me make tea, so I decided to take my clothes off instead."

## NEWS IN BRIEF



Allason: appeal victory

## Ex-MP wins new chance to sue paper

The former Tory MP, Rupert Allason, has won the right to a new trial against *The Mirror* over what he claims was a malicious story that cost him a book contract. The Court of Appeal ruled that Mr Allason, who writes as Nigel West, can bring a fresh action, claiming damages lost as a result of the 1996 article.

## Sex offences

Ian McCormick, 38, a former local Labour Party official and school governor in Nottinghamshire, was jailed for five years for serious sexual offences against a schoolgirl.

## Killer recaptured

David Burgess, 50, jailed for life in 1967 for murdering two nine-year-old girls, was recaptured after escaping from Leyhill open prison, Gloucestershire, in September 1996.

## End of the pier

The rusting remains of Margate pier are to be sold for a pound and dismantled. The jery, which opened in 1855, was largely demolished by a storm in 1978.

## Whistle and flute

A button-covered suit belonging to the Peary King of Peckham was stolen from his car. George Major, 59, a plumber, had raised thousands for charity in the suit.

## CORRECTION

A photograph of Lord Hurd of Westwell wrongly accompanied a report in late editions yesterday relating to Paul Robeson, the singer. We apologise for the error.

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# Labour calls for £15m election spending limit

Campaign restriction would hit the Tories hardest, reports Andrew Pierce

LABOUR proposed a £15 million limit on general election spending yesterday. The restriction would badly hit the Tories, who spent almost double that amount on their campaign last year.

The recommendation is part of Labour's submission to the investigation into party political funding by the Neill Committee on Standards in Public Life. Today the Tories will put forward their proposals, which include an investigation into Labour's trade union links, which they estimate are worth £7 million a year.

Labour is advocating the establishment of an electoral commission, with legally binding powers to enforce any changes put forward by the Neill committee. It would be a criminal offence to defy any of the new regulations and the commission would have the power to compel political parties to return any donations that it deemed unsuitable.

One of the most controversial suggestions could stem

from the flow of company donations, which are worth millions of pounds to the Tory party. Labour has recommended that any shareholders who object to political donations should be entitled to a rebate proportionate to their stake in the company.

Party officials admitted yesterday that imposing a limit on election campaign spending is fraught with difficulties. "One difficulty will be to know at what point before an election the limit begins to bite," Labour's report stated.

Labour, which spent £26 million in the two and a half years before last May, says that the restriction should not apply from when a general election is called, but that the commission should determine the appropriate date.

Under the Labour proposals a strict limit of £15 million would be imposed in election campaigns on third parties who try to promote or oppose the interests of a political party. Such a change would curtail the kind of campaign

conducted last year by the Yorkshire millionaire Paul Sykes, who gave thousands of pounds to Tory candidates who took a stand against British membership of a single European currency. Labour agreed in its submission to phase out the blind trusts that sustained the private offices of Tony Blair, Gordon Brown, and John Prescott when the party was in Opposition.

Michael Levy, who raised £7 million for Mr Blair's blind trust, was given a life peerage in the Prime Minister's first honours list. The decision will put immediate pressure on Margaret Beckett, the President of the Board of Trade, who is the only Labour frontbencher to maintain a trust. The identities of the donors are known only to trustees and not the



Beckett: will lose her blind trust

recipient. But a senior party spokesman was adamant that this was in no way an admission that Cabinet Ministers and the Prime Minister were wrong to have used blind trusts. "We are not apologising for or being defensive about anything that has happened in the past, but if we are going to move into a new era with a new structure there is no longer any need for the blind trust," he said.

Labour reiterated its opposition to foreign donations and maintained that the level at which the identity of donors should be disclosed should be £5,000 nationally, £500 locally. Lord Neill of Bladen, chairman of the standards committee, argued last month that the level should be £1,000.

Leading article, page 25

## RIDDELL ON POLITICS

# Blair must start using his party's principal asset

ARISE President Blair. The latest MORI poll for *The Times* demonstrates how Tony Blair is succeeding in creating an image distinct in many people's minds from that of the Government as a whole. This creates intriguing strategic possibilities for Mr Blair.

Mr Blair's personal approval ratings are much higher than those of the Government and are well above levels of support for the Labour Party. Past prime ministers have also been rated more highly than their governments and parties. But Mr Blair not only has a much more favourable personal rating than his predecessors but he is also much further ahead of his Government and party than they were.

At present, the public is satisfied with his performance as Prime Minister roughly by a two-to-one margin, a net balance of plus 29 points. But the public is roughly evenly divided on the way the Government is running the country. Even though the number of people currently backing Labour is, at 52 per cent, a record for a governing party at this stage of a Parliament, the proportion who are satisfied with Mr Blair is even higher at 60 per cent.

Margaret Thatcher always had more people who disapproved of her strongly than Mr Blair now does. For instance, at the height of her power in the mid-1980s, at least 45 per cent, and occasionally as many as 60 per cent, of the public were dissatisfied with her performance as Prime Minister. This compares with 31 per cent now for Mr Blair. Mrs Thatcher's net approval rating was negative for much of this period and was usually only positive for short periods, such as at the time of the Falklands war and of her election victories.

John Major's ratings were ahead of his Government and of the Tory party, but this is only saying that he was less unpopular than the most unpopular government in polling history. After Black Wednesday in

September 1992, his ratings nosedived and only recovered slightly towards the end of his premiership. Similarly, while Mr Major was rated more highly than his party, this did not prevent the Tories' worst result for more than a century.

Mr Blair has the double advantage of high ratings and being well in advance of his Government and his party. That will delight his advisers who have deliberately cultivated his "presidential" image, separate from his party and above the everyday battle. This was underlined by his ability to appear as a national figure speaking for the country as a whole in after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, six months ago.

But how should this authority and high ratings be used? Mr Blair's public appearances are frequently in non-partisan settings such as

his promotion of the Millennium Dome project on Tuesday, at award ceremonies and hospital and school visits. There is seldom any suggestion that he is Labour leader and is mainly presented as Prime Minister.

Within the Government, Mr Blair is obviously involved closely on key issues, but he has so far avoided being dragged, at least publicly, into ministerial and party battles. Perhaps luckily, he was not damaged by the Bernie Ecclestone affair. The Government's caution over a single currency has postponed a confrontation with some political and media allies. But sooner or later, he will need to commit his authority to resolve tricky problems such as welfare reform and to sell to the public the inevitably painful solutions.

Mr Blair's personal popularity is the Government's most important political asset. But it cannot just be nurtured and defended as an end in itself. It has to be used before long if Blairism is really to change the political landscape and to mean more than "warm words" and appealing images.

PETER RIDDELL

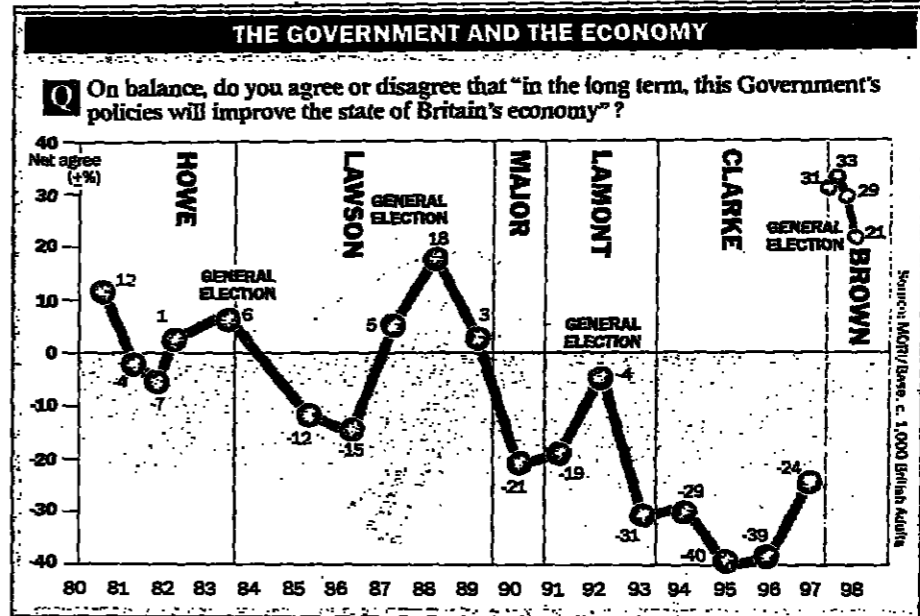
# Poll shows the voters have faith in Brown

By Peter Riddell

THE public is more optimistic about the long-term impact of government policies on the economy than at any time during the Tory years in power, according to the latest MORI poll for *The Times*.

The public also remains more confident in Gordon Brown as Chancellor than any of his predecessors from 1979 until 1997. His net approval rating, measuring those satisfied less those dissatisfied with his performance, now stands at plus 16 points. While this is half the post-election level, the last time a Tory Chancellor had a positive rating was in March 1990, when John Major was in the Treasury and his rating was a mere plus 2.

The poll, undertaken last weekend, shows that just half the public agrees that in the long term this Government's



policies will improve the economy, while less than a third disagree. The net balance of plus 21 is higher than during the Tory era, though is lower than the plus 29 of last November. The public were only optimistic about the long-term impact of the Tories' policies in the second half of the 1980s when Nigel Lawson was Chancellor. In general, the public ac-

cepts the Government's claims about improving the economy, even though it recognises there may be problems in the short to medium term. The MORI economic optimism index, measuring the proportion thinking that the economy will improve over the next 12 months, stands at plus 2, against minus 1 at the end of January. This compares with a net

balance of plus 21 on the longer-term outlook. Professionals and managers are much more optimistic than the public as a whole about the economy over the next 12 months, at plus 11, and share the general optimism over the long-term impact of government policies, at plus 22. MORI interviewed 1,792 adults at 164 sampling points on February 20-23.

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# Oprah cleared of 'mad cow' disease libel

FROM GILES WHITTILL IN LOS ANGELES

A TEXAS jury took barely six hours yesterday to dismiss a \$11 million (£6.7 million) libel lawsuit brought against Oprah Winfrey by a consortium of cattlemen angered by her remarks about "mad cow" disease.

The verdict in Amarillo, capital of the US cattle feed industry, ended a six-week trial that tested the reputations of American beef, a talk show queen and a controversial law designed to protect agribusiness companies from defamation. Cheers went up outside the courthouse when news of Ms Winfrey's victory emerged late yesterday morning. Leaving the court arm-in-arm with her lawyer, the host of America's top-rated talk show addressed supporters, calling her win a great day for free speech. "Free speech not only lives, it rocks," she said.

A group of cattlemen led by Paul Engler, an Amarillo cattle feed merchant, filed the lawsuit against Ms Winfrey and her programme, Oprah, after an anti-meat activist said on a broadcast in April 1996 that if bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) took hold among American cattle and was transferred to humans it could make AIDS "look like the common cold". In a now-infamous response, Ms Winfrey turned to her audience and said: "That's it. It has just stopped me from eating another burger".

Mr Engler filed the suit when cattle prices appeared to drop nationally as a result of the remarks, in what became known as the "Oprah crash". The cattlemen sought more than \$11 million in damages and anticipated solid support in Amarillo, where the largest private employer is a slaughterhouse and a mural of cattle adorns the wall above the courthouse lifts.

In the event, "Oprah outfoxed the cattlemen", as a CNN legal consultant put it yesterday. When Ms Winfrey, who was initially opposed to facing trial in Amarillo, failed to have the case moved closer to her Chicago base, she moved her entire broadcasting operation to a rented theatre near the courthouse.

Gestures of support for the cattle industry from the local chamber of commerce — including a memorandum barring employees from attending Ms Winfrey's shows — gave way to adulation for the biggest star to grace Amarillo. Ms Winfrey's defence also fielded a formidable array of expert witnesses. They testified that cattle prices had started to fall before her broadcast and that the cattlemen had profited from the price drop by buying cheap animals.



Oprah Winfrey leaves court in Amarillo, where a jury dismissed a libel case against her. Ms Winfrey told her supporters that the verdict was a victory for free speech.

## WORLD IN BRIEF

### Yeltsin threatens to sack three ministers

Moscow: President Yeltsin delivered a stern televised lecture to his Cabinet yesterday, and gave a warning that three ministers faced dismissal (Robin Lodge writes). He stopped short of naming names. Mr Yeltsin continued recent threats by calling for a rough approach to assess the Government's performance, but if his words were aimed at making his administration tremble, they singularly failed to do so. Many in the auditorium laughed.

Russia has curbed inflation and last year the economy recorded its first growth since 1989. Viktor Chernomyrdin, the Prime Minister, called for changes in the tax system and said yesterday that the country was now on course for 5 per cent annual growth by the turn of the century.

### German sex-slave swoop

Düsseldorf: In one of their biggest operations against organised crime, German police raided brothels, flats and refugee homes to break up a gang believed responsible for forcing Eastern European women into virtual slavery as prostitutes. Sixteen suspects — Italians, Albanians and Turks — were arrested. Two of the 24 women freed were kept locked up for seven months without seeing daylight. (AP)

### US to end drug sanctions

Washington: President Clinton is to lift sanctions against Colombia despite its failure to co-operate fully in fighting drugs, a senior official said. It would stay on the blacklist, but Mr Clinton recognised improvements, he said. Meanwhile Colombia's comptroller-general, David Turbay, is being sought for allegedly taking drug money for his political campaigns, Caracol Radio reported. (AFP)

### Spanish police chief jailed

Madrid: Luis Roldan, the former head of Spain's Civil Guard police force, was jailed for 28 years after being found guilty of amassing £7 million in a four-year campaign of extortion, bribe-taking and fraud (Giles Tremlett writes). The sentence ended a bizarre tale of spies, crooks, politicians and police officers that left Spaniards aghast at the extent of corruption in the country's administration.

### Turkish prison protest over

Istanbul: Twenty hunger strikers close to death in a Turkish prison reached an agreement with authorities after 49 days. The protesters, jailed for ties to the rebel Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), were demanding better conditions and an end to harassment of their families. Nationwide hunger strikes will continue in opposition to government policy of single cells for political prisoners. (Reuters)

### Seoul MPs maintain boycott

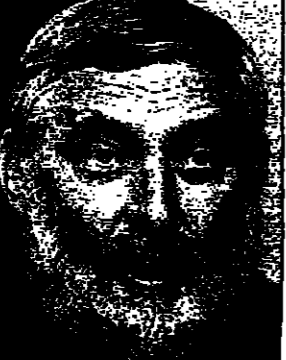
Seoul: South Korea's new administration had to work with the old Cabinet as the stalemate continued over parliamentary approval of President Kim Dae Jung's nominee for Prime Minister. Because the majority Grand National Party, which is in opposition, boycotted parliament for a second day to block a vote to confirm Kim Jong Pil as premier, cabinet appointments were derailed. (Leading article, page 25)

### Time called on happy hours

The Hague: The Netherlands plans to abolish so-called happy hours, where bars lure customers with cheap alcohol in the early evening. The move is aimed at curbing street violence. In a letter to parliament, the Dutch Cabinet also called for more security cameras to monitor public areas and more police to patrol streets at night when bars and discotheques close. (Reuters)

## Paris and Bonn meet euro club membership criteria

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS



Fischler: 'euro will alter role of Commission'

EUROPE moves a step closer to monetary union today when France and Germany join nine other EU states in reporting to Brussels that they have met the key Maastricht test for joining the euro.

Years of budget cutting, higher taxes and recent boasts of creative accounting have paid off, ensuring that all willing states except Greece are likely to be invited in May to enter the euro club at its inception in January. Britain, Denmark and Sweden have chosen to stay out of the enterprise, in which national currencies will be locked irrevocably and then replaced

in 2002 with euro notes and coins. Greece is still far from achieving the requisite economic discipline.

At today's deadline for reporting on the test year of 1997, Germany is expected to announce a budget deficit of 2.9 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) — below the 3 per cent limit that amounts to the main test. France is expected to record 3 per cent.

The figures, produced with the help of some controversial bookkeeping in both countries, are a relief to the EU's two core states. German compliance is expected to weaken the case of four professors who have argued in the Constitutional Court that monetary union should be postponed because the stability criteria have not been met.

In an ironic turn, the Franco-German deficits have been bettered by Italy, Portugal and Spain, the so-called Club Med states long lectured by Germany on fiscal discipline. Their likely membership is adding to German jitters over the leap from the solid mark to the uncertain euro. Italy's deficit, also due to be announced today, is expected to be about 2.8 per cent of GDP. Champions of the currency say fears of southern profligacy are misplaced.

In buoyant mood, EU officials are hailing the achievement of the 1992 goal of bringing EU economies into the rigorous budgetary line. Five years ago, average deficits were double. Franz Fischler, the Austrian Commissioner, said yesterday that the euro

would set the scene for the Commission talking on the role of a national Government. "It will start with the achievement of the euro from January 1, 1999. Eighty per cent of economic policy is already made in Brussels," he told an Austrian magazine.

The Commission will announce its favoured candidates on March 25 and the final list will be chosen at a summit chaired by Tony Blair on May 2. As current President of the EU, Britain is under pressure to act before the summit to resolve the last outstanding quarrel over the management of the euro. Bonn and Paris are at loggerheads over rival Dutch and French candidates for the chairmanship of the future European Central Bank.

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SCOTT APPLEWHITE/AP

# Angry senators accuse Albright of appeasement

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

## AMERICA

MADELEINE ALBRIGHT came under further fierce attack yesterday from congressional leaders for allowing the United Nations to take the lead in the Iraqi settlement and for supporting the UN-backed "appeasement" of President Saddam Hussein.

The Secretary of State, formerly Ambassador to the UN, retaliated after three days of congressional vitriol with an attack on Congress for blocking payment of America's overdue UN fees.

"Let me tell you frankly that if we are not able to pay our UN arrears soon our legs will truly be cut out from under us at the UN," she told the Senate Appropriations Committee in a session — nominally about the foreign budget, but dominated by the heated partisan

tussle over Iraq. The US military buildup has so far cost more than \$600 million (£366 million), the Pentagon has revealed. Congress has budgeted \$700 million for Gulf operations this year.

The 1991 Gulf War cost an estimated \$61 billion in all, of which the US paid \$7 billion. The costs rise sharply the second missiles start flying, the Pentagon says.

Ms Albright rejected accusations that the UN-brokered deal represented appeasement, saying that "we retain the authority, the responsibility, the means and the will to use military force" if Iraq fails to comply with the new commitments.

This week's attacks on Ms Albright for "subcontracting" foreign policy to the UN were

led by Jesse Helms, a leading conservative senator, despite the widely noted rapport between the two. Senator Trent Lott, the Republican majority leader, has accused the Administration of "caving-in" to the Iraqi dictator.

Congressional pressure on Ms Albright comes after concern within the White House about her handling of the Iraqi crisis.

President Clinton is understood to have exploded with rage after last Wednesday's "Town Hall" televised debate in Columbus, Ohio, when Ms Albright and other senior security officials defended the possible use of force against Iraq before a sceptical audience.

Mr Clinton, believed to be wary of taking on a public question-and-answer session himself while the Monica Lewinsky saga is still raging,



Baroness Thatcher with Sheikh Saud Nasser al-Sabah, Information Minister, on a visit marking the seventh anniversary of Kuwait's liberation

is understood to have been furious at the stumbling and lacklustre performance of his security team.

He accused officials of surrendering control to Cable News Network, which had exclusive television rights to the event. The cameras revealed tiers of empty seats around the

sporting arena, and officials were made to look vulnerable, seated on flimsy chairs under blinding lights.

Perhaps most damaging, the audience contained many university staff and students, who appeared committed opponents of military action under most circumstances.

In her plea to Congress to back the budget, which is barely higher than last year's, Ms Albright said that the State Department had "basic needs" in information technology. Telephone switchboards were threatened with "catastrophic failure" and, if not fixed of the "millennium bug", the

department's computers could "all crash and send us back to the age of quill pens and scribes".

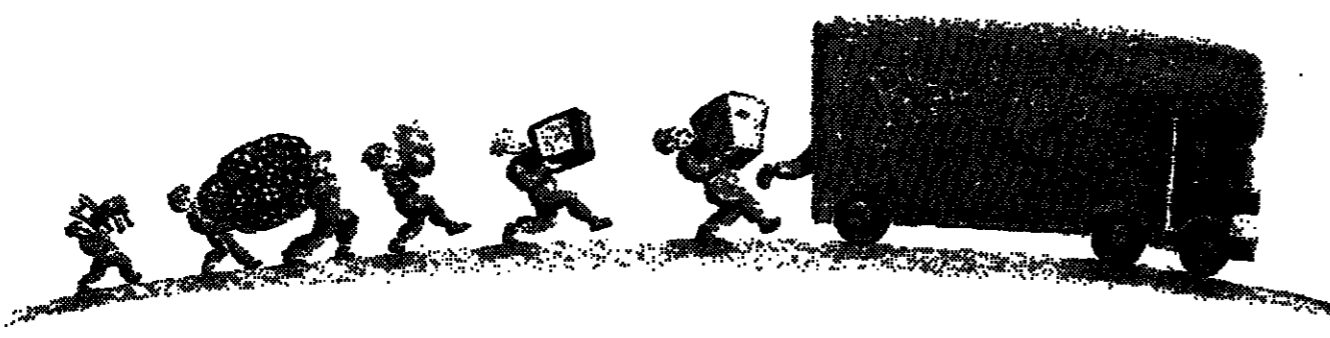
□ Baghdad: The first of more than 80 UN staff, pulled out amid threats of a US-led military strike against Iraq, started to arrive back here yesterday. About 20 staff who

had been told to stay abroad on special leave arrived in the morning.

A larger group of up to 60, who had been redeployed to Amman, the Jordanian capital, were expected back later in the day. (AFP)

Matthew Parris, page 24

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# Annan defends deal against critics in US

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

## UNITED NATIONS

THE United Nations Secretary-General yesterday defended his weapons-inspections deal with President Saddam Hussein of Iraq in the face of a barrage of criticism in the US Congress and elsewhere.

Kofi Annan said in a personal letter to UN staff that the inspections system run by the UN Special Commission (Unsc) would have collapsed in the absence of the accord. "It was not unexpected that there would be some criticisms of us and misrepresentations of what we have done in Iraq, but you must not be disheartened," Mr Annan wrote. "The alternative to the agreement would have expedited Unsc's work. The Memorandum of Understanding has strengthened it."

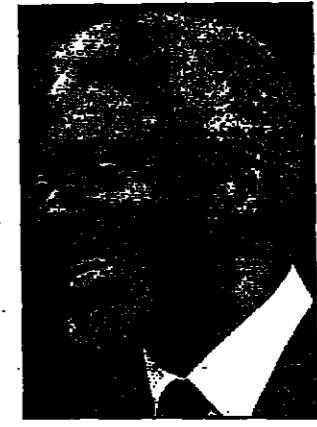
Moving quickly to toughen the deal, the Secretary-General yesterday named a leading disarmament expert to head the "special groups" of diplomats and inspectors to search the eight presidential palaces identified in the Baghdad accord.

Jayantha Dhanapala, a Sri Lankan diplomat appointed recently to head the UN's new disarmament department, won wide respect for negotiating the indefinite extension of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty in 1995. He has been a friend and colleague of Richard Butler, the chief UN weapons inspector, since they underwent diplomatic training together in Canberra 30 years ago. Mr Butler, a tough-talking Australian muzzled

during Mr Annan's mission to Baghdad, held a press conference yesterday to deny that the agreement had weakened his inspectorate. "These arrangements are entirely satisfactory to me and the organisation I lead," he said.

Britain is asking the Security Council to warn Iraq of the "severest consequences" if it breaks the agreement. The language of the draft resolution echoes the warning transmitted to Saddam by the five permanent council members through Mr Annan.

According to the text, the 15-nation council would repeat Iraq's obligation to accord "immediate, unconditional and unrestricted access" to weapons inspectors. It would also reaffirm the council's commitment to "consider action to lift" the UN oil embargo if Iraq complies fully with UN demands.



Annan: written letter to all staff at the UN

# Blair to tell Israel of peace concern

BY MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

TONY BLAIR is to visit Israel and the Occupied Territories in April to mark the nation's 50th anniversary while expressing Europe's consternation at the impasse in the Middle East peace process, the Foreign Office said yesterday.

He is to hold talks with Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, and Yasser Arafat, President of the Palestinian Authority, to underline Britain's determination that the Israelis hasten their withdrawal from the occupied areas and abide by the Oslo accords.

Next month Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, will precede him in a regional tour of Israel and its Arab neighbours. This is also intended to counter Arab charges of Western hypocrisy in threatening Iraq with military action but doing little about the failure of Israel to carry out United Nations Security Council resolutions.

"We remain extremely disturbed that the peace process has stalled," the Foreign Office spokesman said. "We recognise the frustration that this causes around the Middle East. We want to work with the Americans to make a deci-

sive push in the months ahead." Mr Blair and Mr Cook did not want to supplant the American role in the Middle East, which the Foreign Office said was "the only game in town". But they are expected to be far tougher than previous British governments in condemning what they see as delaying by the Netanyahu Government.

Britain is worried that it has suffered a sudden drop in popularity in the Arab world over its readiness to use force against Iraq, and that street demonstrations

singled out Britain along with America. This could affect the prospects for Britain's lucrative trade in the Middle East.

Mr Cook is to give a speech to the Anglo-Arab Association next week that is expected to pull no punches in identifying Israel as the cause of the breakdown in the peace process. He will underline Britain's insistence that all Israeli settlements are illegal, call on Israel to be more flexible and regret the delay in implementing the Oslo accords.

## BRITAIN

Handwritten Arabic text at the bottom of the page.



# Swiss seek apology over Mossad fiasco

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM AND PETER CAPELLA IN GENEVA

ISRAEL and Switzerland were on a diplomatic collision course last night after an admission that Mossad, the Israeli secret service, had been caught red-handed last week trying to bug telephones in a private house on the outskirts of the Swiss capital, Berne.

Israel has so far failed to respond publicly to Switzerland's demand for an apology. Despite denials by the Swiss authorities that the target of the five-strong espionage team was Iranian diplomats, the Israeli media continued to hint that there was an Iranian connection. Other speculation focused on a possible Iraqi link as Switzerland is a base for Baghdad's attempts to get around sanctions imposed by the United Nations.

A furious row erupted in Israel after the disclosure that details of the latest Mossad bungle had been leaked by Israeli officials in order to force this week's resignation of Danny Yatom, the discredited Mossad chief.

In Berne it was disclosed that the five Mossad agents had been caught in the middle of the spying operation last week thanks to an eagle-eyed neighbour. Carla Del Ponte, the Federal Prosecutor, confirmed that one Israeli was in custody after he tried to break

into a basement, apparently to install electronic surveillance equipment.

However, it later emerged that the Israeli secret service was spared more embarrassment because local police did not immediately realise what they were dealing with and released the four other Israelis after an identity check. Warrants have been issued for their arrest but they are believed to have left the country.

Mrs Del Ponte said a neighbour alerted police when she noticed three people standing in the street in the peaceful suburb of Zam. The occupants of the house were foreigners.



Del Ponte: confirmed arrest of one Israeli

but she declined to give their nationality.

A spokeswoman for the Foreign Ministry said: "The people targeted were private, they were not diplomats."

Switzerland is home to a number of Islamic groups including Lebanese, Palestinians and Algerians.

Angry Swiss officials delivered a formal protest to the Israeli Government on Monday. "This incident is unacceptable and has a chilling effect on relations between friendly countries," said Jakob Kellenberger, the Foreign Affairs Secretary.

Israeli sources disclosed that the Swiss authorities had been prepared to deal quietly with the fiasco until the Israeli press published reports about it on Wednesday.

Binyamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister, refused to be drawn into comment about the affair. He merely confirmed the arrest of an Israeli in Switzerland and said Israel was dealing with the case through diplomatic channels. "I have nothing to add. We are taking care of matters. We will do what is needed to solve the problem," he said.

Mossad has been involved in two previous scandals since September, which have cast a shadow over the once vaunted organisation. The Tel Aviv

daily *Yediot Aharonot*, which first published news of the Swiss operation, said yesterday that senior Mossad officials had decided to leak the news in the hope that it would force Mr Yatom to announce his resignation immediately.

"You cannot even begin to assess the damage that has been caused by the leaks regarding this latest affair, and it points to the insularity that has recently gripped Mossad," a senior diplomatic source told the paper.

"Mossad used to have the image of working like a Swiss clock, and now it is almost like a Swiss cheese - full of holes," said Amir Oren, a columnist for *Haaretz*. "Mossad is turning into the laughing stock of the intelligence world. It needs new blood."

Ariel Sharon, a leading cabinet minister, said: "I have nothing but the strongest condemnation for these leaks and whoever wants to continue doing so has to understand he is simply a terrorist to the security and sometimes to the existence of Israel."

Earlier reports had spoken of a mutiny within Mossad because Mr Yatom, 52, a former army officer, had refused to quit over last September's botched attempt to poison Khaled Meshal, an Islamic militant in Jordan.

## Israeli spy 'lied about Syrian'

FROM AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE IN TEL AVIV

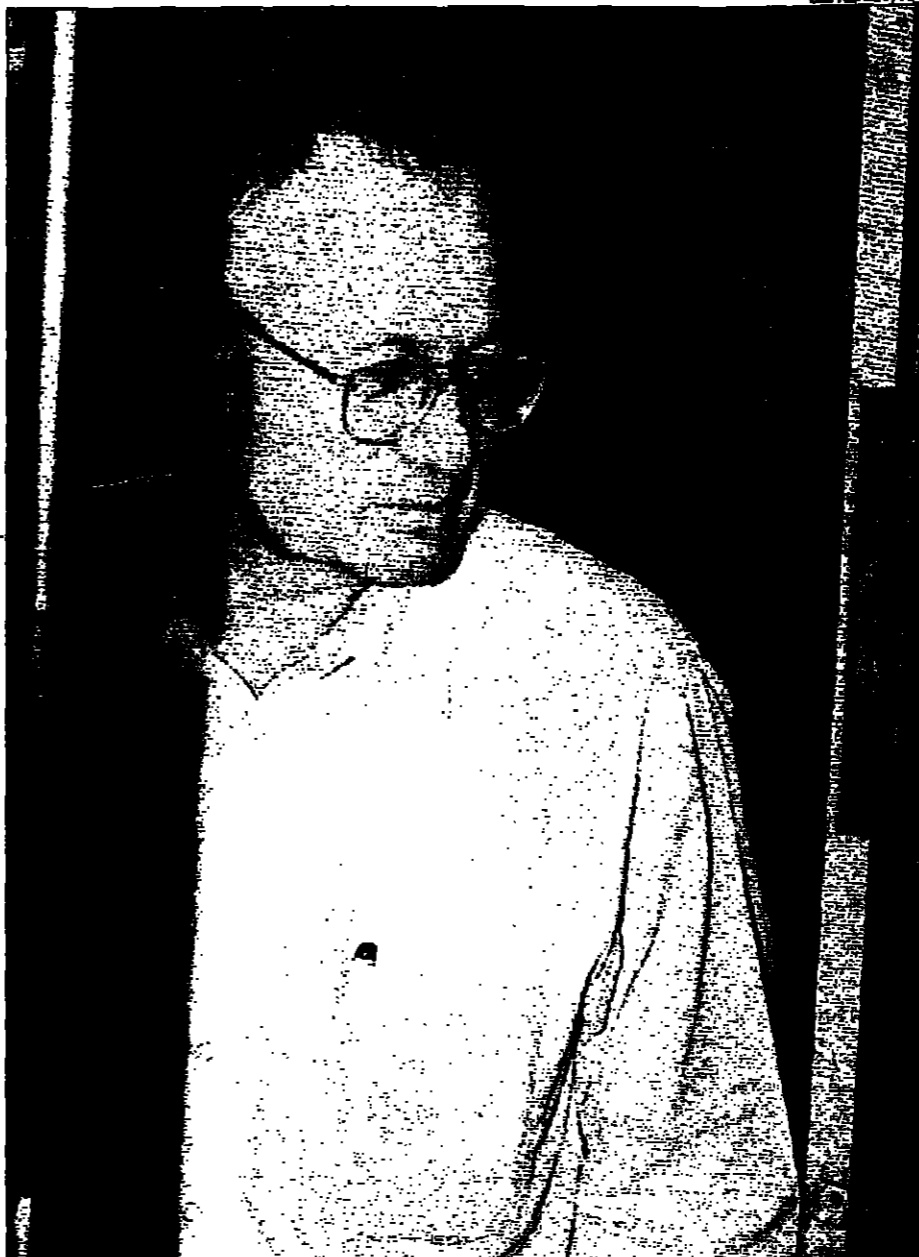
A MOSSAD agent accused of providing false reports of Syrian hostility towards Israel attempted yesterday to get his case thrown out of court, saying his confession had been extracted illegally.

Yehuda Gil, 63, has been charged with espionage for allegedly fabricating or distorting information purportedly received over a 21-year period from a Syrian contact. Gil told the closed-door hearing in Tel Aviv that his testimony was taken without warning, illegally, and under pressure. Igal Shapira, his lawyer, told army radio. The court will rule on the matter by Sunday, the radio said.

Gil met his source several times but after their meetings ceased, he made up information. Twice, in 1980 and 1986, Gil allegedly heightened tensions between Israel and Syria by feeding his superiors false data that Damascus was planning an attack to recover the Golan Heights, captured by Israel in 1967 and annexed in 1981.

Gil, who has links with far-right circles in Israel, has denied espionage and fraud, but faces up to 15 years in prison.

Tens of thousands of dollars given to him over the years for his Syrian contact were found in the former agent's home.



Danny Yatom, the former head of Mossad, in Tel Aviv this week after offering his resignation. Leaks of the latest blunder further undermined his position

## Service's decline marked by catalogue of blunders

BY CHRISTOPHER WALKER

MOSSAD'S record of misadventures goes back well beyond the recent spectacular buggles in Jordan and Switzerland.

Probably the most painful failure in its turbulent 47-year history was the mistaken killing in July, 1973, of a Moroccan waiter, Ahmed Bouchiki, in Lillehammer, Norway. Bouchiki had been mistaken for a Palestinian terrorist, Ali Hassan Salameh, who was being sought in revenge for the Munich Olympics massacre.

Not only did Mossad - the Institute for Intelligence and Special Assignments - get the wrong man but its "avenue squad" was arrested and six members brought to trial. The Israelis had been deliberately misled by a double agent who directed them to the wrong target and tipped off the Norwegian police.

A foretaste of the recent foul-up in Berne occurred in the Cyprus capital, Nicosia, in April, 1991, when four Mossad agents, two men and two

women, were arrested while replacing the batteries in a bugging device planted next to the Iranian Embassy. They were fined and released.

Israeli-Swiss relations were upset in 1963 when two Mossad agents were arrested in Berne for intimidating a female member of the family of a German scientist who had been offered a job in Egypt's missile development programme.

Co-operation between Mossad and Britain's MI6 has been patchy. In 1986 Margaret Thatcher, then Prime Minister, ordered a freeze in relations between the two after a woman Mossad agent lured Mordechai Vanunu - the man who gave Israel's nuclear secrets to *The Sunday Times* - out of London to Italy, where he was kidnapped.

A year later a Mossad agent left eight forged British passports in a West German telephone box. They were traced back to the Israeli Embassy in Bonn, causing a diplomatic row with Britain. Also in 1987, Palestinian

terrorists murdered a Palestinian cartoonist in London. Weapons belonging to the killers were found in the British flat of a Mossad agent, Ismail Sowat, who was arrested. He claimed to have let the terrorists use his flat while he spied on them.

Mossad's reputation suffered a further blow last year from the disclosure that one of its most senior agents had systematically deceived the agency for 20 years about Syria's military intentions by inventing reports that twice almost led to war. He pocketed \$1.5 million (£900,000) which should have been paid to his Syrian army contact.

Despite Mossad's fall from grace in the decades following its successful kidnapping from Argentina of the Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann in 1960, its leaders felt able to absolve themselves of all responsibility for the assassination in Tel Aviv of Yitzhak Rabin, the Prime Minister, by a Jewish extremist in 1995. The job of protecting him was in the hands of the internal security service, Shin Bet.

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FEBRUARY 27 1998

**Murder weekend climaxes with real killing**

By Tom Rocco in Washington

IT WOULD BE easy to imagine the Marple or Hercule Poirot investigating the murder of St. Michael's, a rural hamlet that has become the focus for a crime novel by Agatha Christie.

The mystery at Harlow's Giff Road Centre in the eastern shore of Essex. Bay took two men in a rather in-law who had the grocer's daughter's strychnine.

has taken almost two months for police to solve the murder that followed the disappearance of a 28-year-old woman.

Mr. Hindu was the only man in the village who was not a member of the Hindu community.

Later, the police found a sleeping bag and a sleeping bag in the room.

Mr. Hindu was the only man in the village who was not a member of the Hindu community.

LOCATIONS NATIONWIDE

# Bigots fan Muslim fear of Hindu conspiracy

## INDIAN ELECTIONS

**The votes of 120 million Muslims are so crucial that even the extremists of the BJP are wooing them, writes Christopher Thomas from Hyderabad**

MUSLIMS are a mystery to India's political parties as the general election campaign moves towards its final phase. From Lucknow to Hyderabad and Delhi, where millions live in crowded isolation in the rundown old sections of town, their mood is apprehensive.

Fear of Hindu nationalism is felt strongly in these feld alleyways, where petty retailers, gold dealers, cobblers and textile stores operate in a riot of noise and congestion.

The BJP embraces moderate Hindus as well as anti-Muslim extremists. It rose to prominence through religious fanaticism but adopted a more moderate posture to capture the Hindu centre ground, vacated by the disintegrating Congress Party.

In 1984 it had two MPs; today it has 161, and next month it will almost certainly have more.

professional new moderation is a mask. Lal Krishna Advani, the party president, who today preaches religious tolerance, was a key player in the atrocity.

Many Muslims were slaughtered by Shiv Sena, a BJP ally, in Bombay in riots that followed the demolition, while police stood by on the orders of local Hindu political leaders.

Extremists within the BJP question the patriotism of Muslims, often an excuse for rioting against them. They are accused of supporting the Pakistani cricket team when it plays India and of backing

Kashmiri Muslim separatists. Such accusations are met with disgust in the Muslim-owned tea shops of Hyderabad and Lucknow, where it is hard to find anybody with a good word for Pakistan or, especially, Kashmiri separatism.

Khalid Rasheed, 24, who will one day succeed his father as imam in Lucknow, says Muslims are offended by challenges to their patriotism. One or two Muslims might support the Pakistani cricket team against India but they are a tiny minority. Most Indian Muslims felt only contempt for Pakistan.

"It is not a true Islamic country because it does not have an Islamic constitution," he said. "In India, Shias and Sunnis do not kill each other in their mosques like they do in Pakistan. The creation of Pakistan was a mistake. If it had not

been created, the Muslim community in India would have been bigger and a great force."

He rejected accusations that there was substantial Muslim support for the Kashmiri uprising. "Most Indian Muslims think the Kashmir movement is whipped up by Pakistan. Kashmiri Muslims don't think of themselves as Indian. We do. We have no sympathy for them."

India's 120 million Muslims, divided and leaderless, have no natural political mooring. All parties — the BJP among them — are wooing them but nobody knows who will be the biggest beneficiary. The Congress Party hopes that Sonia Gandhi's apologies for past atrocities will bring them back to the fold.

Muslims are disproportionately poor, uneducated and under-represented in most centres of power. Syad Kalbe Jawad, a Shia *maulana* (religious leader) in Lucknow, believes there is a conspiracy to keep it that way. "Wherever Muslims have made money, like Surat or Ahmedabad, there have been Hindu-Muslim riots," he said. "It is no accident. It is designed to keep us down politically and economically. The BJP would only make things worse for us."



# Mob seeks death for runaway couple

FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS IN KARACHI

RIOT police brandishing automatic weapons surrounded Sindh High Court yesterday as a Pathan girl, sentenced to death by tribal elders for marrying her true love, arrived in an armoured personnel carrier.

Wearing a traditional red wedding dress and heavily veiled, Riffat Afridi, 18, appeared briefly before Chief Justice Wajihuddin Ahmed to deny charges by her father that she had been kidnapped.

Outside the court in Karachi, hundreds of Pathan men gathered to demand that she be returned to her family to be executed, and her husband sentenced to death.

Afridi's husband, Kanwar Atson, a member of the Mohajir ethnic group, has been charged with having sex outside marriage — a crime punishable by death.

Their elopement caused riots in Karachi earlier this month. They are in protective custody, pending a ruling on her father's claim.

A policeman escorts a heavily-veiled Riffat Afridi to court in Karachi. Outside, a Pathan mob demanded she be executed.

# BJP wins vote to regain power in Uttar Pradesh

FROM AGENCY FRANCE-PRESSE IN DELHI

HINDU nationalists, hoping to come to power in the elections, yesterday regained control of a key state government, domestic news agencies said. The nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won a hotly-contested vote of confidence amid uproar in the Uttar Pradesh assembly, the Press Trust of India said.

The state, the most populous in the country with 140 million people, is regarded as India's heartland. The nationalists hope their victory will underline their claim that they are the only party able to provide stable government just before

the final phase of polling tomorrow. The Uttar Pradesh assembly vote was ordered by the Supreme Court after days of political paralysis in the region. The confusion began at the weekend when the state governor replaced a BJP administration by an opposition coalition after it lost its majority.

The BJP challenged the governor's decision in court, however. That led to the Supreme Court ordering a confidence vote to determine who controlled the assembly.

Sonia Gandhi, the Italian-born widow of Rajiv Gandhi, the assassinated Prime Minister, meanwhile wound up her campaign on behalf of the party yesterday after completing a political itinerary during a six-week whistle-stop tour of about 135 rallies.

A security scare, however, overshadowed the finale of her campaign after suspicious documents were reportedly found on a dead body near one of her rally venues. Police said they would increase her security cover after a man's body was found in Bilaspur, in the state of Madhya Pradesh.

Counting begins on Monday and results are expected within a couple of days.



Gandhi security scare at end of campaign

# 4 ACADEMY AWARD NOMINATIONS including Best Supporting Actor - Anthony Hopkins

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# Japanese triple suicide blamed on debt squeeze

FROM ROBERT WHYMANT IN TOKYO

THREE middle-aged businessmen were found hanged yesterday in a suicide pact that dramatised the plight of firms squeezed by a prolonged recession and a severe credit crunch.

The men, who killed themselves with identical ropes in separate rooms of a Tokyo hotel, were all heads of medium-sized car parts firms facing collapse. Police found a note in one of the rooms that said: "My company has run out of funds and can no longer continue operating."

Tokyo police said the men — Masaki Kobayashi, 51, Masaru Sudo, 49, and Yoshimi Shoji, 49 — had supplied each other with car parts, helped each other over financial difficulties and apparently decided to end their lives at the same time when bankruptcy loomed.

They checked into the hotel on Wednesday evening and are believed to have gone together to one of the rooms,

where they drank beer and whisky and cut a length of white rope they had brought with them into three parts.

Two of the men then returned to their own rooms, before each used the rope to make a noose. Hotel employees found the bodies hanging from air-conditioning vents early yesterday.

Sales of the companies' car parts were badly affected by the continuing slump, and by competition from discount stores. Mr Kobayashi's family yesterday told police the last straw was the refusal of banks to provide funds needed to keep his business afloat.

Last night the Japanese media were blaming the triple suicide on a severe credit crunch that is aggravating the nation's economic woes. Banks that lent recklessly in the 1980s boom, ending up with bad debts, are clamping down on lending in an effort to boost their capital ratios, a measure of their soundness.

Denied access to operating funds, many well-run companies are being forced to lay off workers, or to close altogether.

The Tokyo Chamber of Commerce said yesterday that since last autumn it had been flooded with complaints from small businesses that had been turned down when they applied for bank loans.

The three deaths are the latest in a series of suicides by company executives facing financial ruin. According to police figures, 478 executives committed suicide in 1996, a 16.3 per cent rise over the previous year.

With corporate bankruptcies on the increase, business organisations have given a warning of a steady rise in suicides among owners of small and medium-sized companies unable to live with the shame of failure. Last year 16,365 firms went bankrupt, 13 per cent more than in 1996, and the level is expected to rise as the economy stagnates.

Although the circumstances of yesterday's tragedy were unusual, suicide in Japan is a classic response to a desperate situation. Killing oneself is regarded as an honourable way of escaping shame or embarrassment, and of shielding one's family from financial disaster.

Last week Shokei Arai, a politician, hanged himself hours before police planned to arrest him in connection with illegal share deals. Mr Arai's death was the fourth suicide linked to a series of financial scandals involving bank and brokerage executives, senior bureaucrats and politicians.

Although prosecutors said they were continuing their investigation, there is a widespread feeling here that even if Mr Arai was guilty of the alleged offence, he has wiped the slate clean by taking his own life. The effect of Mr Arai following the samurai tradition has been to make many other politicians suspected of similarly corrupt deals look shabby and ignoble by comparison.



Tibetan monks pass a Chinese policeman during a procession in Beijing celebrating the Tibetan new year, which starts tomorrow

## Tokyo leader wins the right to smoke

FROM REUTERS IN TOKYO

A JAPANESE court yesterday ruled in favour of Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Prime Minister, after he was sued by five anti-smokers who claimed his smoking habit violated the country's constitution.

They demanded a token 50,000 yen (£240) in damages and that Mr Hashimoto give up smoking while leader of the country. But the presiding judge said that while smoking induced health hazards, smoking by adults was legal and an individual did not have the responsibility to stop, even as a prime minister.

The plaintiffs said that an article of the constitution guarantees Japanese a healthy life and Mr Hashimoto, as Prime Minister, was obliged to uphold the consti-



Hashimoto: sued by anti-smoking group

He had said he would carry on smoking while avoiding imposing a burden on the medical insurance system.

## Baptist leader accused of racketeering

FROM TUNGU VARADARAJAN IN NEW YORK

THE president of the National Baptist Convention, the largest black church in the United States, has been charged with theft and racketeering, including the diversion into his personal accounts of money donated for the rebuilding of several churches which were burned down.

The Rev Henry J. Lyons — no stranger to controversy — was arrested on Wednesday night at his home in St Petersburg, Florida, and charged with violating the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organisation Act. He was also charged with two counts of theft of sums totaling \$330,000 (£200,000).

This includes the bulk of a \$225,000 donation given to his church by the Jewish Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith to rebuild churches destroyed by arson



Lyons: charged with stealing donations

in several towns in the South. Mr Lyons, a friend of President Clinton, is charged with putting the money into a secret account.

The Jewish group contends that "not a dime" was spent on the burned churches. Arthur

Teitelbaum, southern area director of the league, told *The Miami Herald*: "We certainly have felt betrayed by the Rev Lyons. We have co-operated with law enforcement authorities in this case and will continue to do so."

Other details of the charges against Mr Lyons include a conspiracy to defraud a bank, an insurance company and a corporation that runs cemeteries. He was released on bail of \$100,000.

Bernice Edwards, one of his associates, was also detained by police at her home in Milwaukee and charged with complicity. Mr Lyons has been linked romantically to her. In fact, the black leader's last brush with controversy featured Ms Edwards as a central personality.

Last year, members of his denomination accused Mr Lyons of using the church's money to buy a "love nest", worth \$700,000, in a smart

waterfront quarter of St Petersburg. Details of the alleged affair with Ms Edwards made headlines across America in July, after his wife, Deborah, was found trying to set fire to the house and charged with arson.

"She later said that she had inadvertently dropped a lit match on a carpet, unfortunately causing a minor blaze". Although Mr Lyons then survived an attempt to impeach him for adultery and embezzlement, the latest charges are likely to spell the end of his leadership of the convention.

He took office in 1994 as head of the Baptists, a denomination which accounts for a quarter of all black Americans, promising to clean up the church's fraud-riddled accounts. His three-and-a-half-year tenure is littered with damaging allegations of fraud. In 1996 Mr Lyons and other leaders of the church

offered to build a 500-room hotel on four acres of land next to the Broward County Convention Centre in Fort Lauderdale.

Yet the deal collapsed when Mr Lyons refused to provide investors with his organisation's financial statements.

The *St Petersburg Times*, a newspaper which has followed his career in some detail, has also alleged that Mr Lyons served as an unregistered — and lavishly paid — lobbyist for the military regime in Nigeria of General Sani Abacha. The regime has been condemned widely for its human rights abuses.

In December he said: "I have sinned, and I have displayed human weakness and frailties."

He talked about the corrupting power of money but he made it clear he would not give up his Baptist presidency before the five-year term ends in 1999.

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Handwritten text at the bottom of the page: "صحة من الاصل"

Calm down. All you need to do is worry

Modern life dissected. A new weekly column

Prodded into action by stress therapists, many people are finally tackling the main source of tension in their lives by plucking up the courage to approach a successful office colleague...

But, contrary to what most therapists suggest, stress is actually good for you. You only have to look about you to see that most people don't get nearly enough.

People who live under the stress of challenging jobs tend to be among the world's more heroic achievers against the odds: think of the Pope, or of Margaret Thatcher, think of Demi Moore's PR manager.

A lack of stress, on the other hand, results in such products as amoebas, gravel, and Paul Daniels. Yet

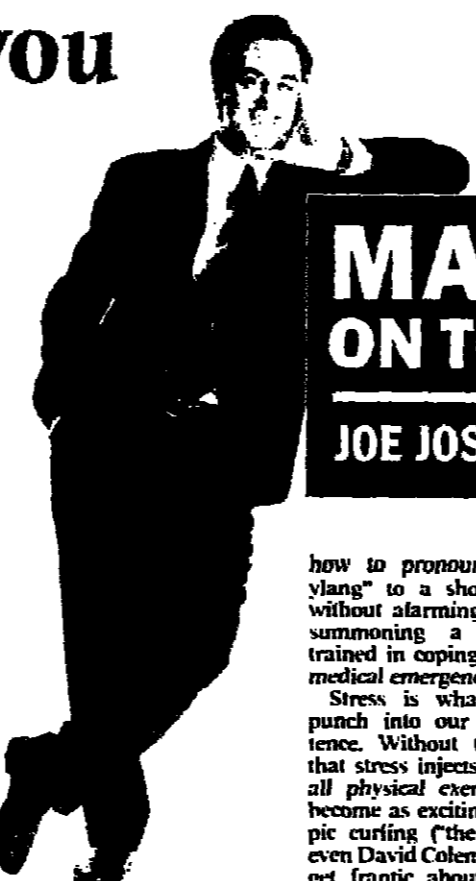
bookshops are about to make room for two new books which advise us how to cut out still more stress from our lives. One, *Calm At Work*, is a read-it-and-relax book by Paul Wilson, the author of *The Little Book Of Calm*, the bestselling title in Britain last year. It will have to share shelf space in Waterstone's with a work that recently spent 21 weeks on *The New York Times* bestseller list. *Don't Sweat The Small Stuff... and It's All Small Stuff*, by Richard Carlson, who has obviously carved out an impressive literary reputation as an author who is so laid-back that he can't even be bothered to edit down his own book title.

Carlson's advice includes "smiling when there is nothing to smile about". This is pretty much guaranteed to reduce stress, but only if you would find a subsequent spell of detention in a padded cell,

under medication, relaxing. Here's another of Richard Carlson's top anti-stress tips: "Smile at strangers, look into their eyes and say hello." And here's one of mine: "But only if you're agile enough to run away before they call the police."

Much of Wilson's advice is actually counter-productive. He recommends jaw exercises. I find that jaw exercises make your workmates think you're getting more stressed, not less. This is because moving your jaw up and down without actually emitting any sound always reminds them of Edward Munch's *Scream*.

Many of Wilson's tips seem designed specifically to amplify everyday levels of anxiety. His "calming" advice to add ylang-ylang oil to a shallow dish of warm water, under which you have lit a candle, would bring me out in a sweat. I'd be worrying



MAN ON TOP JOE JOSEPH

how to pronounce "ylang-ylang" to a shop assistant without alarming them into summoning a paramedic trained in coping with scary medical emergencies.

Stress is what puts the punch into our daily existence. Without the tension that stress injects into sport, all physical exercise would become as exciting as Olympic curling (the sport that even David Coleman couldn't get frantic about). Stress is

also nature's in-built self-preservation mechanism. Without high levels of female stress, for example, many hives would be unsafe for habitation by life-forms other than those which have been allowed to establish large and socially complex communities in the bathroom and kitchen.

This is because, housework-wise, men register very low on the stress register. A man can stare at a kitchen that is so teeming with interesting bacterial life-forms that it would qualify for a scientific research grant, but still not feel impelled to take action until the infestation reached dangerous proportions: for most men this is when the colony grows large enough to be allocated its own postcode.

Stress is your body's way of steering you towards the optimal solution to the problems and anxieties that crop up in life. If your current optimal solution is to become stressed enough, Marlon

Brando is not stressed enough. That is why he is now roughly the size of Brooklyn. Brando's weight problem may now be beyond even the corrective powers of stress. His smartest option

ing stress. Some people swallow pep pills because they think it will take their mind off their worries. But generally they only make them worry faster.

Others, instead of harnessing the inventive power of stress, just fret about it instead. They should beware: thinking too deeply about your problems like this is not always a good idea. Just take a look at people who have spent their life deep in vexed thought, such as Albert Einstein. If you, too, want to end up with a shock of white hair and a bushy moustache, fine. But if you're a woman, I advise against it.

Lack of stress results in products such as gravel

may be to move on to a diet of kimchee, the famously pungent pickle that is Korea's national dish. Eating kimchee won't actually make Brando any thinner, but it will certainly keep people at a distance. He will look thinner at a distance. Stimulants are another fool's way of address-

So take my advice and make stress your friend. Try it next time you encounter a dilemma: stress will instinctively guide you towards the merit of one option over another. Faced with a choice between two rival courses of action, a calm person just doesn't know how to decide: that's how Liberal Democrats were born.

Tom Clancy v the Royal Navy

Jason Cowley watches our chaps engage in a clash of cultures

Dressed in their dark lounge suits, the men from the Royal Navy file solemnly into the National Liberal Club in Whitehall. They gather in huddles under the benign gaze of a bust of Lloyd George. This is the monthly forum of senior naval staff at the Ministry of Defence, and they are here to listen to the American super-

novelist Tom Clancy talk about how his techno-thrillers have enhanced the reputation of the US military. Except that it doesn't quite turn out that way.

Clancy is a cultural phenomenon: arguably the most popular novelist on earth, a close friend of Ronald Reagan and Oliver North. He is the man of whom Colin Powell, the former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the Pentagon, once said: "A lot of what I know about warfare I learnt from reading Tom." He is, too, as the naval officers discover to their bewilderment, a force of nature, an indomitable man of trenchant opinions, a maverick.

Conversation stops as he strides into the room with an intimidating vigour, accompanied by a striking blonde wearing a fabulous ring, a gleaming diamond as big as the Ritz (Clancy was reported, in 1996, to have grossed \$50 million — £31 million).

He is tall, straight-backed and muscular, the John Wayne of fiction. With his dark, steel-framed spectacles, he resembles a highway cop or perhaps a hitman. The smoke from his cigarette spirals and curls.

Captain Peter Hoare, the head of defence studies at the Royal Navy, introduces Clancy by saying that he needs "no introduction". Clancy nods approvingly, stubs out his cigarette and says: "I've never been in a liberal club; I'm a conservative." There is a ripple of polite laughter. His next remark draws applause. "What's the difference between Bill Clinton and the Titanic?" His answer involves a reference to the number of women who went down with the latter.

Clancy is finding his stride. Speaking without notes and diverting wildly from his expected subject, he delivers his

theory of warfare. He roams restlessly across centuries, offering pot-historical details of the great battles in a slangy, wised-up vernacular. "The freedom of the seas would never have been won if you guys hadn't defeated the Armada," he says, indulging his audience.

"As for Nelson, it was pretty easy for him to beat up a lot of French fleets. He had better ships and better sailors; it was child abuse on an industrial scale."

His speech is punctuated by assaults on liberals, the French, Hollywood ("giving your book to Hollywood is like turning your daughter over to a pimp"), the CIA, Marxist-Leninists and Saddam Hussein.

Two days have passed since the UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, negotiated an agreement in Iraq. While Clancy expresses relief that war was avoided, he is disappointed that Saddam is still

alive. "Saddam is the Ted Bundy [an American serial killer] of world politics; war is his recreation." He then expounds what he calls the Ryan doctrine, named after the hero of his novels, "The Ryan doctrine is about taking out the principal enemy, Saddam. What you do is drop four or five SAS-style guys into Iraq, guys who can disappear in an instant, who can speak the language, have the moustaches and funny clothes. What they do is use ground laser designators to track and locate Saddam. Then bang, you strike from the air."

Tom Clancy evidently lives in a world of simple certainties, a two-dimensional realm of good and bad guys, black and white, with no shade in between. The son of a postman, he was an insurance salesman before publishing his first novel, *The Hunt for Red October*, when he was 38. His analysis of Cold War geopolitics and portrayal of the secret world of nuclear submarines was so accurate as to prompt the belief that he had seen classified documents. Within a year he was a millionaire, regularly meeting President Reagan at the White House and delivering lectures to the US National War College. He bought a Sherman tank (parked in the grounds of his 80-acre Maryland estate) and a stake in the Baltimore Orioles, his local baseball team.

After his speech, Clancy asks to be taken to the bar. "He wants to try some English beer," whispers a perplexed Captain Hoare. "Tom's speech

... it was, er, not what we expected. It was, I must say, totally unrepresentative of the views of the British military. He is an unreconstructed Reaganite hawk."

But Clancy is oblivious to the unease around him. Clenching a pint of bitter, he amiably receives questions. "Why do we need to fight a war when we can take out a nation's stock exchange?" a patriotic voice asks. "Yeah," says Clancy. "I covered that in *Debt of Honor*."

I am introduced to him. "Hey, you're the reporter guy. What do you think of the Ryan doctrine?" Before I can answer, he adds: "To me it's the logical extension of modern military technology. Killing people doesn't worry me so long as you have a good enough reason. The Ryan doctrine gives you a reason."

Baffled, I approach Clancy's fiancée. "I'd love to talk to you," she says, smiling. "But I can't." Why not? She lowers her voice. "I'm afraid Tom is going through a particularly messy divorce."

With that she and Tom are led across the room. They have another appointment, dinner at the Commons; yet before they leave the next Mrs Clancy, taking my arm, whispers: "Please be kind to him. He is a good man."



The maverick bestselling author Tom Clancy is proud to espouse Reaganite views

Crisis of conscience over alms and the Elephant Man

THE VISION haunts me still, weeks after the event. The train had pulled into the small town of Ayaviri in the Peruvian Andes, just after I had finished an elegant onboard lunch of a pisco sour aperitif, soup, grilled fish and fruit. Along the platform, a swarm of women and children selling soft drinks, hot snacks, chewing gum and brightly coloured rugs and jumpers milled about under the windows, calling up to the well-fed passengers in the Pullman coach.

And then I saw him, an appalling and, frankly, repulsive sight — a man without a face. One of my companions spotted him at the same moment: "Good grief, look at that guy — he looks like the Elephant Man." He was wearing a hat and a scarf-cum-bandage wrapped around the lower part of his head; above this bandage was an expression that appeared mist and seemed to obliterate his eyes. Another of our group, a doctor, made an instant diagnosis: "That's an advanced cancerous growth, poor so-and-so," he said.

I think that we all subconsciously were dreading what happened next. The man limped up alongside our carriage and began tapping his walking stick on the windows, calling for money — not belligerently, but persistently. And I, like everyone else onboard, averted my gaze and ignored him.

An encounter with a deformed Peruvian beggar presents a moral dilemma for Tim Austin

riage and began tapping his walking stick on the windows, calling for money — not belligerently, but persistently. And I, like everyone else onboard, averted my gaze and ignored him.

He passed along the four-coach train, tapping and calling up. The women and children continued selling their portions of fried chicken, their scarves, rugs and ponchos, their Coca-Colas and plastic bottles of mineral water. And then the man with no face came back, shouting up to us again. And again, we ignored him. The train shuddered into life, a whistle blew twice and we moved on up the line towards Cuzco.

THE OLD MAN may now well be dead. But I cannot forget him, nor can I expunge him from my conscience. There is no doubt in my mind that I faltered; but had I or my companions done so, there is also no doubt that we would have been besieged, for the old man was

only one of perhaps a dozen beggars surrounding the train, old women and children equally persistent in their demands.

Experienced travellers and many guidebooks on Third World countries advise Western tourists to ignore beggars, for fear of being overwhelmed by outstretched palms and pleading faces. In some Indian cities it is well documented that groups of beggars are organised into syndicates by entrepreneurs who make a good living out of exploiting the Westerner's guilt.

So where do we draw the line? At what point does charity become foolishness? Should we — as Christians, or just as humane liberal individuals — ignore the pragmatic advice and give cash to beggars, risking the inevitable clamour thereafter?

I do not know the answer. But it is a moral dilemma that confronts every Western traveller in impoverished regions. And I cannot help but feel that at Ayaviri I got it wrong.



Should charity begin abroad?

Time for Lower Factory Prices and the Best Showroom Service

Advertisement for PC hardware and services. It features several product listings with prices and specifications. Key items include: '200M Family PC' for £799, '233-2 Family PC' for £938.83, and '233M-2 Family PC' for £1099. There is also a 'FREE PRINTER' offer and a '10 years of service and support' guarantee. The ad includes a '41 UK Showrooms' map and a 'Free Now... Pay August '98' interest-free credit offer. The company is 'EXEC Models' and the phone number is '0800 771107'.



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# Fewer quirks but lots of fireworks

London Fashion Week is setting the creative pace. By Grace Bradberry



Sequin tanks: Ribeiro

Snowflakes: Williamson

Glaring colours: Berardi

Fantasy: Macdonald

Conceptual: Chalayan

Androgyny: Nuttall

Shades of grey: Farhi

Celtic appeal: Rocha

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- Religious imagery



Layered look: Jackson



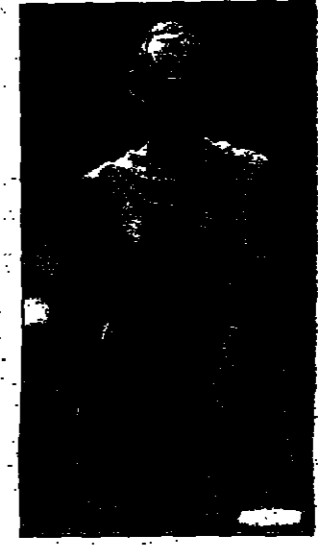
Crystèle models an embroidered kimono jacket and wide-leg pants by Paul Smith



In stride: Westwood



Quilted glamour: Ghost



Chain mail: McQueen

## SMALL CHANGE



With effect from 28 February 1998 the old, larger, heavier 50 pence coins will be withdrawn from circulation.



London Fashion Week was once the eccentric cousin twice removed of the other fashion capitals. Over the past four seasons the relationship has become much closer, with London now setting the creative pace for Paris, Milan and New York. In the process, it has lost some of its quirks — and sobered up considerably.

Only last season the shows and parties seemed to merge into one, with more free alcohol at the former than the latter. This was a relatively dry season, with the vodka less free-flowing and the clothes, too, more commercial.

How does a designer remain "cool" when he/she grows up? Alexander McQueen cracked it on Wednesday, with a sublime show that used real pyrotechnics to highlight the new direction he is taking. McQueen used to love the distasteful — pieces of animal, rotting fruit, "raped" women. By contrast, the burning of Svetlana as Joan of Arc was a glorious fashion image that may well sum up the whole late Nineties London thing ten years from now.

Out of this conflagration emerged a new McQueen aesthetic: softer, summed up by the fluid "chain mail" dresses that opened the show — altogether an original play on the overworked theme of aggressive femininity.

The man/woman thing was also going on at Clements Ribeiro, who produced an "Orlando" collection that played on cross-dressing, with Jacobean fencing jackets split down the arms. Star pieces included tank tops with chunky sequins, a coat with appliquéd poppies on the back, and coloured cashmeres with contrasting bands at the neck.

Sonja Nuttall had a very different take on androgyny, mixing embroidered, sanitised skirts with heavy knits and bobble hats (a hot fashion item at the moment, believe it or not), all to the sounds of choral techno music.

Nobody seeing Paul Smith's womenswear catwalk debut could call it masculine, but the collection does run parallel to the menswear, with fitted versions of the same suits. Smith's philosophy for both lines is hidden luxury for confident women — "I know I'm wearing wool cashmere. You don't," as he put it. The other debut was that of Elspeth Gibson, who produced a shimmering backless

dress of tiny moss-green beads mounted on silver mesh.

Besides McQueen, the young guns of the week did well — but not that well. Berardi's New York themed show was a tad disappointing. Can any woman anywhere find an occasion to wear a baby pink or tangerine trouser suit? Hussein Chalayan's dresses were conceptual, beautiful, but a little less stunning than last season, while Julien Macdonald, the knitwear wiz-

ard, distracted attention from his fantasy work by placing a fake Michael Jackson in the front row (sitting next to Isabella Blow, who was wearing a lobster on her head). There was a shaggy dog story on the catwalk, too — a fairy princess fleeing through an enchanted forest in woolly poodle boots, losing all her clothes along the way. Very fashion.

Elsewhere, Matthew Williamson, last season's wunder-

kind, swapped dragonfly embroidery for snowflakes; Betty Jackson got her layering just right; Nicole Farhi's collection was very grey, with lots of pleated skirts — very chic, very Jill Sander. John Rocha made the Celtic look appear sexy.

And finally, Vivienne Westwood threw a riotous party at a show for her Red Label collection, which found its stride this season with strapless mini-crinolines and Regency splendour.

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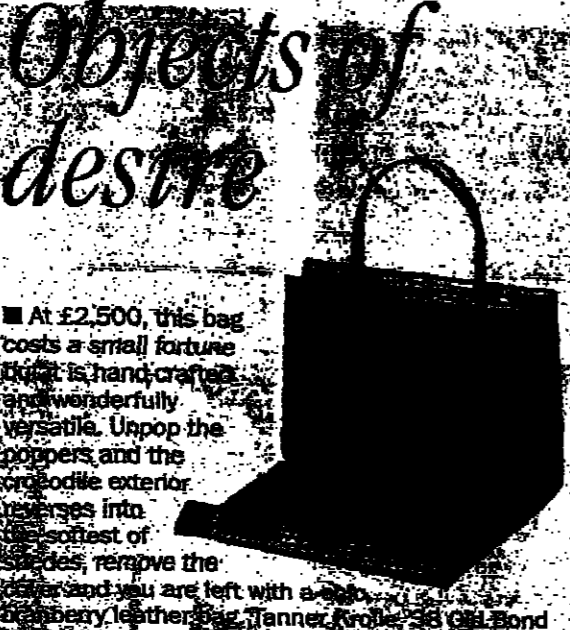
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### Objects of desire



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...your... consists of...  
 ...modern women, having a co-ordinating perfume makes sense. Black, the new fragrance from Bulgari, replaces flowers and unpronounceable French names with hard-edged and minimalist packaging. The unisex fragrance is housed in translucent glass, cold metal and rubber. Available from April in department stores, £35 (0171 872 9969).



Full circle: sexy kitten heels, which were so popular in the Fifties, are making a big comeback this season

### SIX OF THE BEST

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**NAIL STRENGTHENER BY MAVALA, £12.95**  
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**REVLON TOP SPEED DRY COAT, £5.95**  
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**DIAMANCEIL NAIL FILE, £29**  
 A diamond-chip-coated file that is soft-textured and easy to use, giving a smooth press-outside. I'm looking for chipping, and my nails didn't snag on my tights. Space NK and by mail order 0171 656 2523 10/10


**HAND CREAM BY PHILOSOPHY, £17**  
 Time on Your Hands cream comes in beautiful packaging — great as a gift. Smell pleasant, although it makes hands feel clammy when first applied. Liberty, Regent Street, W1 0171 734 1234 7/10

**TIME ON YOUR HANDS**

**NAILOID RESULTS RESTORE INTENSIVE TREATMENT MASK, £4.95**  
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**SALLY HANSEN QUICK DRY SPRAY, £2.95**  
 Quick to use — simply spray over wet nails. Claims to dry nails in 60 seconds — nothing will dry them that fast, but they are smudge-free after a couple of minutes. Leaves an oily film over the nails, which gives them a sheen. From chemists nationwide (01252 533349) 9/10

### HOT TIP



The effects of a damp climate, pollution and hard water combined with over-styling and chemical treatments can wreck hair. Over The Top is a new range of professional hair-care products that help to restore, repair, damaged and dull hair. OTT's Soufflé Shampoo, £5.95, adds vitamins and vitamins, Whipped Cream conditioner, £6.95, can be used as an instant conditioner, detangler or a 5-10 minutes strengthening treatment, while Glazing Moisturising serum, £8.50, protects, adds shine without stickiness and holds hairstyles longer. HQ Hairpressing, 22 Queensway, Bayswater, London W2. National inquiry number: 0171 491 4566.

# A well-heeled fantasy

It is odd, in a world so full of more serious news, that a shoe should be able to dominate the front pages. Well, lots of shoes, actually. The property of the late Duchess of Windsor, with their angular toes and claw-like heels, and glittering colours and general air of never having stepped on the ground, looks more like the contents of Mme de Pompadour's jewel box than devices for keeping your feet from getting wet.

The other interesting thing about the Windsor shoe collection was people's reactions to it. Shoes, en masse, do not have a good rep. They exhale a certain *regime*: extravagance, dissipation, nameless vice.

Why should this be? Shoes are undoubtedly provocative by design as well as by accident. Linda O'Keeffe's small but useful book on the subject contains beautiful pictures of a politically engaged pair of 18th-century French moles (tricolor rosettes, defiant gold brocade), as well as Ava Gardner's extraordinary rhinestone slippers (one green, for "go", one red, for "stop"), whose insistent sexuality might raise a blush even on Vivienne Westwood's

she was small, she thought her dolls had souls. At puberty, this belief somehow transferred itself to her footwear. Anything with the boring function of keeping her warm and decent she can just about resist. But not the siren call of a shoe.

Her shopping expeditions begin — and end — at Manolo Blahnik's jewel-box shop on Old Church Street, London SW3. Flitting past, the fantasist glimpses a white patent mule with wings of swimming-pool turquoise perfectly balanced on a vicious little heel. If it was a car, it would have a telly programme devoted to it. A geisha-like lip-bop in crimson suede and a fuchsia backless loafer all sing "take me home", but with a sigh, the fantasist abandons them in favour of that kitten-heeled classic Cadillac...

Luckily for fantasists, this is a notably sexy season for

## CUTTING EDGE

JANE SHILLING

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Luckily for fantasists, this is a notably sexy season for

shoes. A trawl of the high street seems to show the energy concentrated — as with an old-fashioned view of the British class system — at top and bottom, with a boring swath in the middle for the poor Realist — though Bally's mauve kid and suede high-heeled mule and navy-and-white punched peep-toe sling-back are honorable exceptions.

If I was spending my own money, I would for once abandon my rule of "never mind the label, you can find it in the high street". A really good pair of shoes will lift a mediocre outfit — not just because of the workmanship, but because of their effect on how you hold yourself. For

shoes with soul, built as though by Isambard Kingdom Brunel. I would go to Blahnik. But if I hadn't the patience to save, or wait for the sales, then I might go to Prada for a canvas, almond-toed mule with a rose-pink Venetian heel or to L. K. Bennett for a cherry suede mule. Office has a pretty kitten-heeled sandal with spaghetti straps for only £35, but the season's biggest bargain has to be Ravel's vertiginous platform in tender pink or blue embroidered with almond blossoms for just £30.

PS. Sole City. Shoes from the first to 21st century, is at the Museum of London (0171 400 3699) until March 29.

FROM THE ACCLAIMED DIRECTOR OF 'MY LEFT FOOT' AND 'IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER'

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Reader, I harried him with one blast of aarium laser

I have officially agreed to write a letter to the Editor... I wonder if they are aware that in several parts of Britain...



### DEMOCRACY'S LIMITS

Political spending needs reform, but not capping

The one law which all politicians learn they cannot repeal is the law of unintended consequences. This week has brought a striking reminder of its force with a potentially far-reaching judgment in Strasbourg...

### ASIA'S MANDELA

A long march from prison cell to Korea's Blue House

Into the cobalt skies of wintry Seoul, 1,500 doves soared this week; and for once, the symbolism matched the political event. For South Koreans were celebrating the inauguration of Kim Dae Jung...

### INVISIBLE SERVICE OVERSEAS

VSO should raise its profile and lower its demands

Many a middle-aged professional remembers with nostalgia the year or two after school or university spent in a small town in Africa teaching English or helping the locals to improve their crops...

### Time for Israel to obey Oslo accords

From Mr Menzies Campbell, QC, MP for Fife North East (Liberal Democrat)

Sir, Conflict has been averted in the Middle East by a combination of the Anglo-Saxon threat of force and the singular diplomatic skills of Kofi Annan...

### Who benefits from half-term breaks?

From the Master of Dulwich College

Sir, Your leading article today, "Half-term hangover", attacks the length of school half-terms and suggests a series of long weekends in their place...

### Short shrift for the ladies at Lord's

From Miss Elizabeth Smith

Sir, Those gentlemen of the MCC who have just voted to continue the exclusion of lady members (reports, February 25), are very likely the same ones who are the fiercest critics of present-day coaching and selection procedures...

### Drink-drive penalties

From Mr P. C. Holderness

Sir, Reports of the continued driving by offenders whilst banned — in one recent case convicted for the eighteenth time (report, February 20) — show that driving bans are not a sufficient deterrent for some...

### Battle of Tewkesbury

From Mr M. F. Marix Evans

Sir, Chris Shaw, the Borough of Tewkesbury's director of development, apparently thinks the true site of the Battle of Tewkesbury has already been built over (report, February 20)...

### Police performance

From Mr Michael Barnato

Sir, Mr Fred Broughton (letter, February 23) is right to refer to the danger of domination "by the measurable rather than the material" when discussing police performance indicators...

### Locker-room lawyers

From Mr Ronald Thwaites, QC

Sir, Are the women barristers beating at the door of the locker-room and threatening to overrun us as we perform our ablutions prior to entering court (report, "Male bastion held in contempt", February 20) aware that the barristers' "robing room" is merely a changing room...

### Petrol prices

From Mr John Dawson

Sir, Why have petrol prices decreased between 20 and 40 per cent in the United States and not in the UK (letter, February 26)?

### Old person of Dean

From Miss Patricia Allderidge

Sir, The "hitherto unknown" limerick by Lear about the old person of Dean (report, February 21) has been known to me since I received a copy of Edward Lear's *Nonsense Omnibus* for Christmas at the age of six...

### Hardy's thrush

From Mr Richard Willmott

Sir, Magnus Linklater quotes ("In a bleak midwinter muddle", February 19) from Thomas Hardy's *The Darkling Thrush* to conjure up the Februarys of old. Evocative as these lines may be —

### A mis-spelt youth

From Mr Bernard Goodsall

Sir, Today dyslexia is quite rightly accepted and regarded as unexceptional. Dyslexics are no longer labelled incompetence.

### Business letters, page 33

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk



OBITUARIES

GEOFFREY BUSH

Geoffrey Bush, composer, died on February 26 aged 77. He was born on March 23, 1920.



Though composition was the centre of his life, Geoffrey Bush was a wide-ranging musician whose talents embraced teaching, lecturing, editing, performing as a pianist and an organist, as well as writing and broadcasting. Informing all his work was craftsmanship, vigour and seriousness of purpose that never became merely solemn. He was a regular contributor to the BBC, for whom he developed a series that came from a deep and disciplined knowledge of his subject, yet were always expressed with an ease and lightness of touch, as well as the engaging humour that made him a delightful companion.

Bush's early musical experiences came as a chorister in Salisbury Cathedral, where he learnt to admire the centuries-long tradition of English church music under the choir director Walter Alcock. From Lancing he went up to Balliol College, Oxford, on a scholarship in 1938, taking his BMus in 1940. After wartime service as warden of a hostel for evacuee children, he added a doctorate in music in 1946. At Oxford he became a close friend of a fellow composer, Bruce Montgomery, who was already making a name as a detective story writer under the name of Edmund Crispin. Bush even lent a hand with a genre he always enjoyed, and earned a fleeting appearance in one of his real musical mentors was John Ireland, for whose music and memory he always retained loyal feelings; and it was Ireland who helped to strengthen the sense of English identity which Bush retained even when, in postwar Britain, many musical ears were bent in wider European directions. He once declared: "Borrowing from other countries is as dangerous in music as it is in high finance," though he did not conceal his love of French and Russian music. In this he was close to another figure he greatly admired, Constant Lambert, the dedicatee of the blues-influenced song movement of his First Symphony in 1954. Bush also took great delight in American musicals.

The symphony was first performed at the Cheltenham Festival, where a number of his works were played and where he was a familiar and popular figure in the days when the festival was a prominent showcase for British music. In many ways, his more characteristic works were in smaller forms, where his devotion to brevity as the soul of wit, and simplicity of utterance as a courtesy to the listener, were evident. He was usually at his happiest when stimulated by words, and the range of texts he chose - from Chaucer, Shakespeare, Jonson, Oscar Wilde, Virginia Woolf, Steve Smith, Kathleen Raine - reflected his width of reading, and the sharpness of his understanding of what he read. This naturally took him to opera, initially with *The Blind Beggar's Daughter* (1954), a ballad opera in which his sympathy for vernacular music enabled him to make clever use of folk material drawn into his own idiom. For the Intimate Opera Company he wrote *If the Cap Fits* (1956) and *The Sacred Music Drama Society* *The Equation* (1967), a bleak, pacifist piece concerning the deaths of two pairs of friends at each other's hands in the Roman-Jewish war of AD 70. *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime* (1972), a work with a wealth of witty and stylised allusions that well suit Wilde's story, was composed for students at the Guildhall School of Music. His last opera, on *Loves Labour's Lost* (1988), remains unperformed.

Though his music ranged across many forms, Bush's idiom remained stable and essentially rooted in an English tradition. If this included a gift for understatement, which perhaps limited its wider appeal, he contributed much to the musical scene, and the best of his music certainly deserves more performance than it has tended to receive. His was a highly civilised musical voice, urbane but never aloof. He once wrote: "My music is lyrical, rhythmic, economical, clear-cut in texture and, as far as I can make it, direct of utterance," and it is a fair self-assessment of a gifted and likeable composer.

He married, in 1950, Julie McKenna. They had two sons.

SIR REAY GEDDES

Sir Reay Geddes, KBE, former chairman of Dunlop and the Charities Aid Foundation, died on February 19 aged 85. He was born on May 7, 1912.

East Asia, and later in the Air Ministry, in the rank of wing commander, as deputy director of air transport. He was appointed OBE for his wartime services.

In 1945 Geddes returned to Dunlop. He had gained experience with the company before the war in Britain, in Europe and in India. Now he managed its overseas sales.

After turning 70, he directed his attention increasingly to good causes. As chairman of the Charities Aid Foundation he used his still formidable energies, a wide knowledge of the charities sector and a business address book stuffed with powerful and useful friends, to increase the foundation's funds more than fivefold.

He dragged other good causes, such as Abbeyfield, the National Council for Voluntary Organisations and the Volunteer Centre, to present to governments and donors a coherent and persuasive set of arguments for supporting charities. He helped to bring the concept of Community Trusts to Britain from the United States. And as a wise adviser of Abbeyfield International, he helped it to spread the word of housing and companionship for older people outside Britain, in Europe and the Commonwealth.

Geddes was remarkable not just for his achievements, but for his indomitable courage and durability. In his eighties he was stricken by cancer, by profound breathlessness and by a crippling lameness. For a time he and his wife moved into a nursing home, urging their friends to visit them there "in our waiting room".

In 1997 Lady Geddes died; her husband presided at her funeral, in a wheelchair but with supreme dignity. To the very end of his own life, Sir Reay could be relied upon for advice, a contact, a gesture of support. He is survived by two sons and three daughters.



CHRISTOPHER HOLBOROW

Christopher Holborow, OBE, surgeon, died on February 4 aged 71. He was born on December 24, 1926.



A DISTINGUISHED and well-known London surgeon, Christopher Holborow was still practising at the time of his death. From his early childhood he was determined to be a doctor, though there was no medical connection within his family. He never wavered in this aim.

Born in Suffolk in 1926, he was the second son of George Holborow, a regular soldier who took Field Orders after the First World War, becoming a somewhat unconventional paragon. Christopher and his two brothers were educated at Repton. He went up to Caius College, Cambridge, where he was a scholar, and it was a great joy to him that his son, John, was later also a scholar at Caius, where many of his forebears on his mother's side had been since the 16th century.

While at Cambridge, he won a half-Blue for sailing, and rowed for his college. He was a medical student at the Middlesex Hospital, and then did his National Service in the RAMC as an ear, nose and throat surgeon mainly in Germany, thoroughly enjoying his army life. He was one of the most accomplished surgeons in his field. Following appointments at Great Ormond Street and Guy's Hospital, he practised as a consultant otological surgeon at Westminster, Rochester, and as an adviser to the Foreign Office. The problems of the National Health Service in the 1980s frustrated him and for the last 12 years he had practised privately.

He also did a great deal of voluntary work for the Commonwealth Society for the Deaf, first as a medical adviser organising research, mainly in the Caribbean and West Africa. Later he was chairman of the society for 12 years, in recognition of which he was appointed OBE. He was also, most unusually for a Briton, made Commander of the Order of the Gamma for the work he did there, including the initiation of several schemes to help to prevent deafness. He was president of the English South East region of the Deaf Society. He contributed to, and supported, many other charities, always believing that the most worthwhile objective was to give people the resources and skills that would enable them to help themselves.

B. A. SANTAMARIA

B. A. Santamaria, Australian political activist and Roman Catholic theorist, died on February 25 aged 82. He was born on August 14, 1915.



ALTHOUGH he was never elected to political office, B. A. "Bob" Santamaria had an influence, divisive though it was, on Australian politics and the nation that was greater than that of most politicians. He was hated by old Labor Party loyalists for splitting the party in the 1950s and keeping it out of office for 23 years. He was motivated by a deep mistrust of communism. This led him to found the Catholic Social Movement, which aimed to purge the unions of communist elements. This, in turn, led to the birth of the Democratic Labor Party, which split the Labor movement and allowed the conservative Liberal Party to hold power against a bitterly divided Opposition.

Bartholomew Augustine Santamaria was born of parents who had migrated from the Aeolian Islands off the Tyrrhenian Sea coast of Sicily to set up a fruit and vegetable shop in Melbourne. He was educated at the Christian Brothers College and then read arts and law at the University of Melbourne.

Australia in the 1930s was a country of fierce religious loyalties, and Santamaria grew up immersed in his Catholic belief. A powerful influence on him was the Spanish Civil War. Like many Catholics, he saw Franco as a standard-bearer against communism, and until the collapse of the Soviet Union half a century later, he regarded Moscow as the ultimate threat to liberty in Australia. An excellent public debater, at 22 he was appointed assistant to the director of the new National Secretariat of Catholic Action, set up to spread Catholic influence. His taut but graphic prose style was put to good use with a series of regular declarations on social justice.

The Second World War and the Western Allies' necessary honeymoon with Stalin did not deceive Santamaria as to communism's aims. He felt the decisive confrontation must come in time, and he set up the Catholic Social Studies Movement - later known simply as "the Movement" - to counter communist infiltration of Australian trade unions. He also feared communist infiltration of the Australian Labor Party (ALP) which, with the strong working-class Irish influence in the country, was traditionally the Catholic party. Encouraged by the venerable Archbishop of Melbourne, Daniel Mannix, Santamaria developed the concept of "Industrial Groups" who would gain official ALP sanction to seek election to union office, in opposition to communist or communist-backed candidates. The Movement, and the Industrial Groups, suddenly became sinister-seeming organisations, wielding dangerous, behind-the-scenes influence in the eyes of traditional Labor, especially where it was alarmed at the increased Catholic influence and its right-wing overtones. The crisis broke in 1954 when the Federal Opposition leader, the brilliant but often ill-advised Dr Herbert Evatt, tackled the Santamaria groups head-on, publicly castigating them as "a disloyal and subversive group" of Labor members. This brought to public attention a struggle which had previously been carried out more or less in private. Melbourne Catholicism rallied to Santamaria and against Labor. Priests depicting the ALP as "soft on communism". Labor loyalists warned of the dangers of Australian politics fragmenting. Meanwhile, the country's Protestant majority looked on in bewilderment. Santamaria's supporters, notably in Victoria and Queensland, broke away to form the Australian Labor Party (Anti-Communist), which later simplified its title to the Democratic Labor Party (DLP). The DLP was naturally encouraged by the Liberal and

Country parties, which saw any Labor split as a benefit. It polled erratically in State and Federal elections, but gained enough support to influence the outcome under Australia's modified PR system. The DLP recommended to voters that its preferences went to the conservative parties, and many seats were lost by Labor. The DLP itself won only a handful of seats itself, but its disruptive presence caused Labor to lose six successive elections. It was not just Labor which was divided. The Catholic Church, right-wing in Melbourne but favouring the old Labor leadership in Sydney, ended up at loggerheads with itself, and, in the end, the status of the Movement was referred to Rome. Despite an appeal by Mannix direct to the Pope, the Vatican ruled that the Church should take direct control of the organisation, thus effectively undermining Santamaria's powerbase. Labor now regrouped, and under a new young leader owing no allegiance to the Catholic Church nor to communist sympathies, Bob Hawke finally won power for the party in 1972 for the first time since 1949. The DLP faded away, but Santamaria did not. He continued as a newspaper columnist and lecturer, forgot his concern about the (dying) communist threat, asserting his social conscience, instead, by criticising the life of Western capitalism. He wrote for *The Australian* from 1976 until he fell ill last October. He did not recant in any sense, but became a more mellow figure. In later years he produced books on a range of political and religious topics. Santamaria married Helen Power in 1939. She died in 1980 and he married in 1983 Dorothy Jensen. He is survived by her and by three sons and five daughters from his first marriage.

PERSONAL COLUMN

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS, ANTIQUES & COLLECTABLES, ANNOUNCEMENTS, EX SERVICES MENTAL WELFARE SOCIETY, COMBATFITNESS, CHILDREN ON DIALYSIS

FLATSHARE, FLIGHTS DIRECTORY, FLIGHTS SEARCHERS, HUGHESNET, AIRLINK, ANNOUNCEMENTS

FARESAVERS, JETLINE, FLIGHTWISE, ZURICH EXPRESS, JETWORLD, LEGAL, PUBLIC, COMPANY & PARLIAMENTARY NOTICES

"RED" SUNDAY SCHOOLS, ON THIS DAY February 27, 1923, ACTION BY CONSERVATIVE M.P.s, A meeting of Conservative members, with Mr. RAWLINSON in the chair, was held at the House of Commons yesterday...

ON THIS DAY February 27, 1923, It was by no means only Conservative MPs who were disturbed by the teachings to be heard in what may loosely be called "Red" Sunday schools in the 1920s. "I regret to say," he writes, "that the Communist Party of Great Britain has seen fit to decide to disassociate itself from us and work for the children through the Young Communist League, which, as I understand, brought within its ranks the Proletarian Schools. Apparently our only course is to work and hope for the time when all the children's movements will be united. In this I know we shall have the support of many Communist comrades within our ranks who will continue to work with us and demonstrate to their comrades in the Communist Party that the S.S.S. movement has room for all shades of adult thought, because it teaches the positive ideals from which all Socialist bodies receive their inspiration. Socialist Sunday schools are increasing in numbers all over London, from Barkingside to Fulham, and from Islington to Woodwich. The meetings are held in Co-operative halls, labour halls, Friends' meeting houses, and sometimes council schools, but with regard to the last this does not apply to the London area. There may be present anything from a dozen to 120 children and a few adults. The proceedings consist of the singing of songs from the Socialist Sunday Schools Songbook and a short address, the repeating of 'commandments', and singing of solos.

NEWS

Safety ban on British blood

British blood is not safe enough to have products made from it because of the risk of spreading the human form of "mad cow" disease, the Government has been advised.

Racing trio's £200,000 libel victory

A champion jockey and a husband-and-wife training partnership won almost £200,000 in libel damages from The Sporting Life which said that they had deliberately thrown a race.

Princess's will

The will of Diana, Princess of Wales, has had to be extensively corrected to ensure that her wishes over her £21 million estate are met.

Miners plan new pit

Miners who bought their pit to save it from closure announced plans to open Wales's first new deep coal mine in more than 30 years.

Scarce tickets

Football supporters wanting to see World Cup matches in France are to get just 9,128 tickets for England's three qualifying games in spite of the French being ordered to provide more.

Fewer volunteers

Selfish attitudes and ignorance of other societies are blamed for a fall in the numbers volunteering for development work in the Third World.

Oprah Winfrey wins

A Texas jury took barely six hours to dismiss a £6.7 million libel lawsuit brought against Oprah Winfrey by a consortium of cattlemen angered by her remarks about "mad cow" disease.

Robinson pressure

Pressure intensified on Geoffrey Robinson after it emerged he faces a further Commons investigation into the failure to declare directorships linked with companies owned by the late Robert Maxwell.

Vaccine fear

A possible link between autism and the multiple MMR vaccine is to be investigated by an independent panel set up by the Medical Research Council.

Albright under attack

Madeline Albright came under further fierce attack from congressional leaders for allowing the UN to take the lead in the Iraqi settlement.

Princess in hospital

Princess Margaret will remain in hospital until next week for tests after suffering a stroke in the Caribbean. She was making "steady progress".

Paula Jones 'offer'

President Clinton's lawyers offered Paula Jones £25,000 and some form of public apology to settle her sexual harassment case three weeks ago according to Ms Jones's lawyers.

Life for husband

A former commodore of Southport Sailing Club was jailed for life for strangling his unfaithful wife because he believed that she was an embarrassment.

Business suicides

Three middle-aged Japanese businessmen were found hanged in a suicide pact that dramatised the plight of firms squeezed by a prolonged recession and a severe credit crunch.

Curtain lowered on opera executive

The Royal Opera House executive whose abrasive style was captured by a fly-on-the-wall television documentary has been dismissed. Keith Cooper, the head of sales and broadcasting, was one of two senior managers who were dismissed.



Joanne Hewson of Christie's holds The Kreuzer, an 18th century violin by Stradivari. It is expected to sell at auction for £850,000.

BUSINESS

Morgan Grenfell: A City regulator reprimanded a former compliance officer of Morgan Grenfell Asset Management for his failure to report irregularities in funds under the control of disgraced manager Peter Young.

SPORT

Cricket: Mark Ramprakash has been recalled to England's team for the fourth Test against West Indies in Georgetown. There are likely to be two other changes.

ARTS

Fun factor: "People see the dome as a political creation. If it were handed over to some showbiz mogul to run, we could enjoy it for the glorified funfair it is," says Richard Morrison.

FEATURES

Tough guy: Jason Cowley meets Tom Clancy, the John Wayne of writers and possibly the world's most popular novelist.

MARKETS

Markets: The FTSE rose 19.7 to 5764.8. Sterling was unchanged at 105.2 after falling from \$1.6469 to \$1.6460 and rising from DM2.9837 to DM2.9847.

FOOTBALL

Football: Brighton and Hove Albion, who are second from bottom of the Nationwide League, appointed Brian Horton, a former club captain, as their manager.

MUSIC

Materially better: Madonna returns to her dance-floor roots for possibly her best album in years. Ray of Light: David Sinclair reviews pop CDs.

TECHNOLOGY

Straw's law: Journalists have published their worries about privacy legislation.

FORECAST

24 hrs to 5 pm: b=brilliant; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=drizzle storm; du=dust; f=fog; g=gale; h=hazy; m=mainly; o=overcast; r=rain; s=sunny; sh=showers; sp=spitting; st=stony; t=thunder; w=windy.

WORLD CITY WEATHER

153 destinations world wide & 6 day forecasts by Phoenix Ltd 0236 412126 or 0236 410333

MAGAZINE

Music is no longer the top priority. Eric Clapton talks about becoming a drugs counsellor.

HEALING

Free guide to alternative medicine

RADIO & TV

Preview: Graeme Garden and Jeremy Hardy lead teams in a political quiz. If I Ruled the World (BBC2, 10pm). Review: Paul Hoggart on Real Women: contrived script, fine performances. Pages 50, 51

OPINION

Democracy's limits: The limits on election expenditure which currently exist and are currently proposed could lead to consequences both unintended and illiberal. Page 25

Asia's Mandela

The contrast between South Korea's swift response to crisis and the paralysis in Jakarta contains lessons for all Asia. Page 25

Service overseas

If employees had a pledge that they could return to a job with their employer after working for VSO, they might feel more secure about venturing abroad. Page 25

MATTHEW PARRIS

War and rumour of war is a kind of delirium. It becomes possible to believe almost anything. Every kind of horror comes flapping at you out of the dark. Hard daylight scales the monsters down. Page 24

PHILIP HOWARD

Educationocrats suggest boys should be lured down the yellow brick road by Sherlock Holmes and Raymond Chandler so that they may catch up the girls in appreciation of Jane Austen and George Eliot. Page 24

JOHN LLOYD

The Government wishes to encourage society to develop self-regulation - but at every turn, it finds that society politely passes the parcel back. No one wants to enforce an order which does not carry an official stamp. Page 24

PETER RIDDELL

Arise President Blair. MORI shows how Tony Blair is creating an image distinct from that of the Government as a whole. Page 14

Geoffrey Bush, composer: Sir Rony Gaddes, former chairman of Dunlop; B.A. Santamarie, Australian political activist; Christopher Holborow, surgeon

Israel and UN; half term; MCC; robbing rooms; Battle of Tewkesbury; Lear limericks. Page 25

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,726

Crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-27 indicating starting positions for clues.

- ACROSS
1 Showing anger, ignored an oblique approach (5,3).
6 Main point - American kid makes a lot of fuss (6).
9 Mary and Anne were in the New York area (6).
11 Don't accept lower strength (4,4).
12 Mention installing power units in temporary lodgings (4-4).
13 Counting across a vessel at sea? (5).
14 This plant grows high - found wild in Andorra, so (6,3).
15 Persuade to get drunk a lot, totally smashed! (4,5).
19 Disconcert by putting wood just behind jack (5).
22 Place for dealing with Australian coming in, a prolific scorer (6).
23 Glad to be off duty (8).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,725. A crossword grid with words filled in.

Times Two Crossword, page 56

ROAD AND WEATHER CONDITIONS

Table with columns for UK Weather - All regions, Wales, and various road conditions like M25, M25 and Link Roads, etc.

World City Weather

Table listing weather forecasts for various world cities like London, New York, Sydney, etc.

HOURS OF DARKNESS

Table showing sunrise and sunset times for various locations like London, Bristol, Edinburgh, etc.

FORECAST

General: bitterly cold across Scotland, with strong winds and frequent showers, turning increasingly to snow over on low ground. Northern England, North Wales and Northern Ireland will also be windy and wet.

ABROAD

Table with columns for location, sun, rain, and temperature for various international destinations.



Changes to the chart below from noon: lows X and Y will continue to drift northeast while high B will remain slow-moving

Table showing high and low tide times for various locations like Aberdeen, Liverpool, London, etc.

Advertisement for 'ALL DRINKS SERVED AT 0°' featuring the Union-Castle Line and a Centenary Voyage.

Large vertical advertisement on the right side of the page, partially obscured, with text like 'Umbrella' and 'Battle Argos'.

الجمعة 27 فبراير 1998

# THE TIMES

INSIDE SECTION  
**2**  
TODAY

## ARTS

**Madonna gets back on the dance floor for her new album**  
PAGES 36-39



## MEDIA

**How Bruce Forsyth confounded the adland whiz-kids**  
PAGES 40-43



## SPORT

**Ramprakash gets the nod for Georgetown Test**  
PAGES 49-56

**TELEVISION AND RADIO PAGES 54, 55**

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 27 1998

## Economic growth faces twin-pronged attack

By JANET ROSE  
ECONOMICS EDITOR

Economic growth will slow down more sharply than previously expected in Britain because of the Asian financial crisis and because manufacturing industry continues to struggle under the weight of the strong pound, the Confederation of British Industry said.

stock market registered a record high, fuelled by bid fever and positive corporate results announcements. The FTSE 100 index closed 19.7 points higher at 5,704.8.

The CBI has revised down its forecasts for growth, largely to take account of the Asian situation. It has knocked 0.3 per cent off its forecast for growth this year, now predicting 2.2 per cent for 1998 as a whole. It sees growth slowing to an annual rate of only 1.7 per cent by the end of this year. Growth is expected to slow

to an average of 2.0 per cent in 1999, a cut of 0.2 per cent from the CBI's previous forecast. The total downward revision of 0.5 per cent over the next two years is in line with the working assumptions being used by the Bank of England.

The corollary of weaker growth is that the Government is expected comfortably to hit its inflation target, with the CBI predicting underlying inflation at the end of this year of 2.3 per cent, inside the 2.5 per cent target.

reading from manufacturing would make it more difficult for the Monetary Policy Committee to decide to raise rates at next week's meeting. The CBI said yesterday that it expects base rates to remain at their current level of 7.25 per cent throughout this year, falling to 6.25 per cent by the end of 1999.

The latest trade figures from the Office for National Statistics showed that Britain's trade deficit with the rest of the world narrowed slightly in December, but statisticians

## BUSINESS TODAY

### STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	5764.8	(+19.7)
Yield	2.83%	
FTSE All share	2776.4	(+13.06)
Nikkei	16501.70	(+141.06)
New York	8458.53	(+0.75)
Dow Jones	1043.61	(+0.71)
S&P Composite		

### US RATE

Federal Funds	5 1/2%	(5.25%)
Long Bond	10 1/2%	(10.25%)
Yield	5.94%	(5.92%)

### LONDON MONEY

3-month Interbank	7 1/2%	(7.1%)
Life long gilt		
Future (May)	12 1/2%	(12.1%)

### STERLING

New York	1.6440	(1.6427)
London	1.6462	(1.6466)
DM	1.6855	(1.6857)
FF	10.0050	(9.9983)
SF	2.4138	(2.4129)
Yen	210.55	(211.69)
Index	105.2	(105.9)

### \$\$\$ DOLLAR

London	1.6140	(1.6172)
DM	1.6815	(1.6823)
SF	1.4685	(1.4687)
Yen	127.80	(128.55)
Index	105.2	(105.9)

### NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (May)	\$14.35	(\$14.30)
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### GOLD

London close	\$292.85	(\$291.75)
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## Embattled Argos to lose finance director

By FRASER NELSON

BOB STEWART, finance director of Argos, is to leave the embattled catalogue retailer after 17 years in the job. He is the second senior director to announce his departure within as many months.

Mr Stewart, 52, has been granted early retirement and can step down in four months' time. His salary will rise from £200,000 to £260,000 from April, and he will leave with a £196,000 lump sum.



Stuart Rose played down home shopping ambitions

His departure was detailed as a footnote to the company's formal defence to the £1.6 billion hostile bid from Great Universal Stores yesterday. The news comes three weeks after Stuart Rose took over as chief executive from Mike Smith, who is seriously ill.

"We are not going into home shopping. What we are doing is extending our delivery business, and this is not the same thing as home shopping."

Argos shares fell 6p to 605p, against the GUS offer of 570p cash, after it disclosed a 9.2 per cent slide in pre-tax profits to £128 million — worse than City expectations.

Richard Ramer, analyst at Butterfield Securities, said he was impressed by Mr Rose's defence, and expects the company to force Lord Wolfson into making a 650p-a-share offer, which would value its shares at £1.7 billion.

"In August 1998, Argos will be piloting a home shopping service, whereby any stocked product can be ordered and paid for via telephony. In simple terms, this means the customer can order by phone for home delivery."

UMBRO, the football kit maker due to clothe the England team at this summer's World Cup, has run into delays completing a refinancing and the directors of its UK arm face prosecution for late filing of accounts.

## Umbro own goal as refinancing delays bring prosecution threat

By JASON NISSÉ

Carolina — is the largest part of the kit maker's operations. It supplies, among others, Manchester United, Chelsea and Everton. Umbro recently signed a new agreement with Manchester United, understood to be worth more than £40 million over six years, and signed up Michael Owen, the Liverpool player.

Umbro Europe, the UK subsidiary, has not produced accounts for either 1996 or 1997. It was due to file the 1996 accounts by October but obtained an extension until January 31 because it was attempting a refinancing. This

## Public rebuke over Young affair

By RICHARD MILLS

IMRO, the City regulator, yesterday issued a public rebuke to a former compliance officer of Morgan Grenfell Asset Management for his failure to report irregularities in funds under the control of disgraced manager Peter Young.

Leslie Bruce Hacking, younger brother of Lord Hacking, failed to inform Imro and his own senior management of certain material matters of which he was aware from April to August 1996, the regulator said in a statement.

## Ex-junk bond king fined further \$47m

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

MICHAEL MILKEN, the former junk bond king, narrowly avoided going back to prison yesterday when he agreed to settle charges of breaking his probation agreement and pay a \$47 million (£28.5 million) fine.

The Securities and Exchange Commission said he repeatedly violated the 1991 agreement which banned him from the securities business for life. Mr Milken had been investigated for a year and his probation extended repeatedly to allow the SEC to file the charges.

Mr Milken, 51, did not have to admit any wrongdoing in the settlement and agreed to hand over to the Government profits of \$42 million from a company he started five years ago plus \$5 million in interest.

SEC documents said: "Milken has violated, and, unless commanded not to do so, will continue to violate, the commission's order barring him from associating with a broker."

## Abbey hit

Shares in Abbey National tumbled more than 7.5 per cent after the bank posted lacklustre financial results and reaffirmed its commitment to remain independent. Pre-tax profits rose 16 per cent but included the first full-year for National & Provincial. Page 30

## Centrica support

Centrica shares rose 6 per cent, despite the revelation that warm weather cost the gas distributor £103 million last year. Page 30

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# Abbey National takes a dive after dull results

By RICHARD MILES  
BANKING CORRESPONDENT

SHARES in Abbey National tumbled more than 7.5 per cent yesterday after the bank posted lacklustre financial results and reaffirmed its commitment to remain independent.

Pre-tax profits rose 16 per cent to £1.42 billion, but City analysts pointed out that the figures included the first full-year for National & Provincial, the building society acquired in 1996. The

shares fell 100p to £12.20 from Wednesday's record high of £13.20.

Market watchers also expressed concern at Abbey National's low share of new mortgage business, up to 3.5 per cent from 2.4 per cent compared to its 14.1 per cent share of the total UK mortgage stock.

Aside from the Continental European operations, the UK retail bank produced the poorest returns with pre-tax profits of just 5 per cent. Its general insurance business per-

formed best, increasing profits by 63 per cent, while the life assurance and treasury arms also had a good year.

Ian Harley, chief executive designate, admitted the bank's core business had a poor first half, largely because of the "lock-in" caused by the flotation of four building societies. However, he said there was "a lot in the pipeline for 1998".

Mr Harley, who formally takes the helm from Peter Birch, retiring chief executive, on Sunday, also reiterated

his commitment to an independent future for the bank. He said Abbey's sights would be trained on UK retail financial services until 2000, when the European single currency is expected to be introduced.

He played down suggestions that Abbey might return some of its excess capital to shareholders, as several other banks have indicated.

On a brighter note, provisions for bad and doubtful debts in the UK retail business fell to £60 million

from £80 million. But the group's total operating costs increased 22 per cent, largely reflecting its acquisition of Ceter Allen in July last year.

Robin Down, banking analyst at ABN Amro, described the figures as "disappointing". He forecast a growth rate of 5 to 6 per cent in Abbey's mortgage and savings business, which now accounts for only 50 per cent of profits.

Tempus, page 32

# Centrica incurs loss after mild winter

By ADAM JONES

CENTRICA shares rose 6 per cent yesterday, despite the revelation that warm weather cost the gas distributor £103 million last year.

Centrica, formed in the demerger of British Gas last year, reported a pre-tax loss of £62.3 million in its first year of trading as a separate entity, on turnover of £7.84 billion.

This figure reflected £835 million of exceptional charges, including £573 million to cover the cost of retirement from the bulk of the costly "take or pay" contracts and £192 million paid as a "windfall tax" to the

Government. The shares still rose to 108p as the market reacted to strong cash generation and a £575 million decrease in working capital.

Centrica attributed the latter to an improvement in its billing system and better all-round cash management. Operating profit before exceptional items was £175 million.

Sentiment was also buoyed by the news that a change in the tax treatment of its South Meresbank gas field had a positive effect of about £100 million.

Roy Gardner, chief executive, said: "These results show we have been making good progress. We have made substantial improvements in customer service." He said complaints to the Gas Consumers Council fell 28 per cent.

The ability to retain nearly 20 million customers in a properly competitive gas market had been one of the big questions hanging over Centrica when it was demerged. In 1997, it lost a net total of 900,000.

Based on current experience, Centrica believes it will keep 70 to 80 per cent of a fully-competitive market through incentives such as the Goldfish credit card, which accumulates gas bill discounts, and "dual fuel" deals, where customers are offered savings to take both electricity and gas from Centrica. Goldfish now has 650,000 cardholders.

Mr Gardner said he would continue to lobby ministers to try to stop regional electricity companies selling gas where there is not yet any competition in electricity supply.

He said Centrica's forthcoming foray into electricity supply would be aimed at keeping gas market share. "In the short term, I'm not too concerned about the margin." He said Centrica had supply contracts with 15,000 customers already, despite the delay in introducing competition. The target is 500,000 by the end of the year.

Mr Gardner added that Centrica's exposure to take or pay contracts is now "manageable", at about 17 per cent of its original level. No dividend will be paid, in line with previously stated policy.

Tempus, page 32

# Britannia hit by restructuring

By GAVIN LUMSDEN

BRITANNIA, the third-largest building society, took a £17.3 million charge against the restructuring of its loss-making life insurance business in December.

Britannia Life is shedding 240 jobs after the closure of its intermediary division. It will distribute its products through the society's branch network.

Combined with a £41.3 million loyalty payout to members, the provision reduced pre-tax profit to £57.1 million in 1997 from £71.7 million in 1996. Britannia's 1.8 million members will receive an average bonus of £36, up just £1 from last year. The society

introduced the loyalty bonus scheme in 1996 to reflect the advantages of mutuality.

Despite the £9 million loss at Britannia Life, John Heaps, chief executive, said the society had performed well elsewhere. Total assets increased by £1.7 billion to £17.8 billion in 1997. Net interest received rose 10 per cent, largely as a result of acquiring a portfolio of 20,000 mortgages from Citibank in 1996.

Sales of investment products leapt 183 per cent to £602 million as Britannia Investment Managers and Britannia Fund Managers reported profits of £7.2 million.

# Weather brightens the housing market

By SUSAN EMMETT

HOUSE prices rose moderately in February as the exceptionally mild weather helped to bring forward the normal spring housebuying period, according to the monthly Nationwide survey.

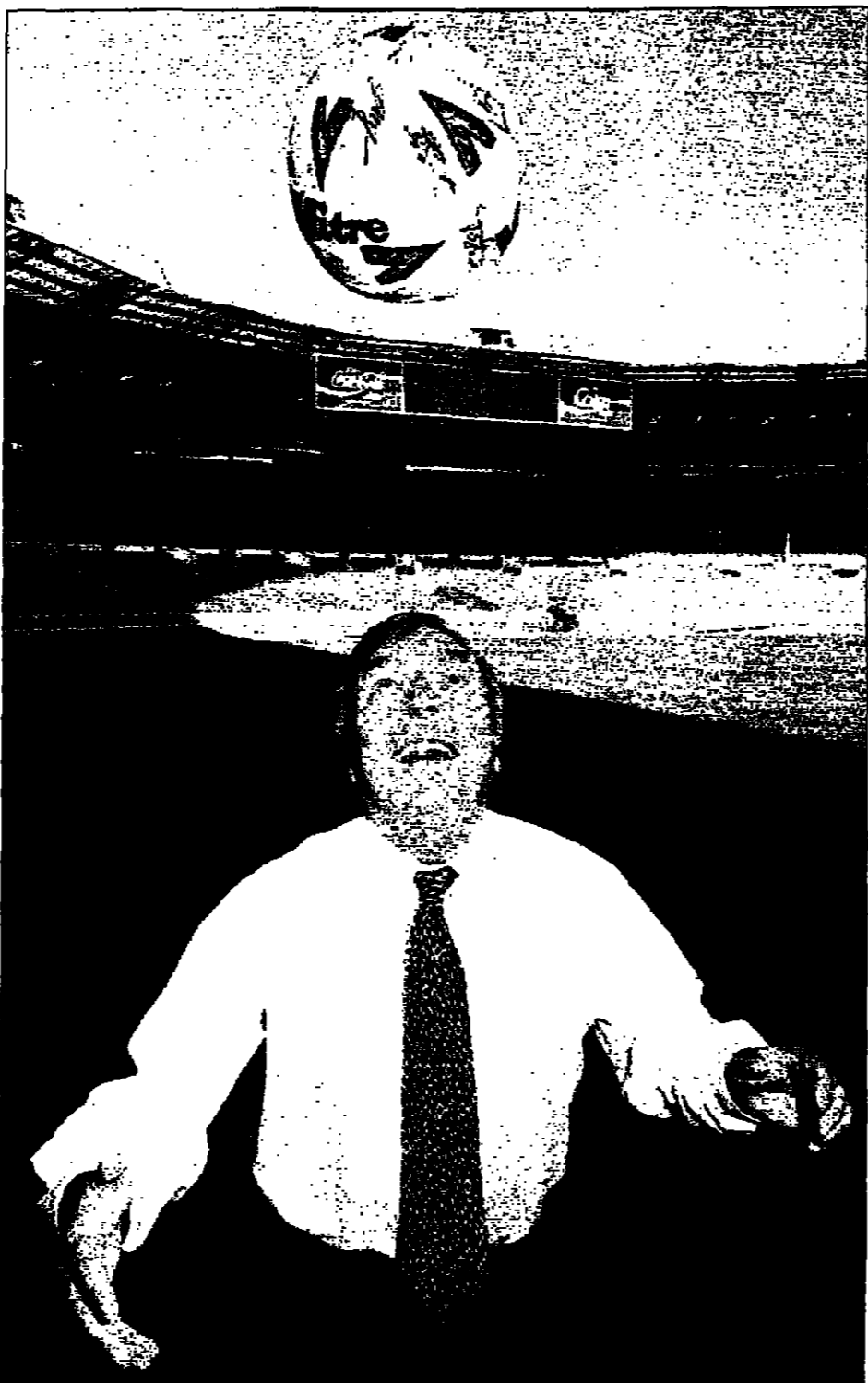
The building society's house price index rose by 0.7 per cent last month and prices are now 12.9 per cent higher than a year ago. Despite a more positive trend in the market after January's increase of 1.2 per cent, prices are still some 28 per cent lower in real terms than their 1980s peak.

The Nationwide believes that recovery will be sustained this year, boosted by competi-

tive fixed mortgage rates. However, separate data from the British Bankers' Association (BBA) point to a big fall in mortgage lending by banks last month. New loan approvals in January amounted to £2,000, a 14 per cent drop from the December figure.

Gross home loan lending during the month dropped by 22 per cent from December to £3.16 billion, although seasonally adjusted net mortgage lending climbed by £756 million in January.

The BBA said there was little evidence that demand would rise from its current level.



Alan Coppin said that a deal on the National Stadium could be signed in April

# Wembley close to stadium agreement

By DOMINIC WALSH

WEMBLEY, the leisure group, said yesterday that a deal over the proposed £200 million redevelopment of Wembley Stadium to create a new National Stadium could be signed by the end of April.

The company has been negotiating a deal with the English National Stadium Trust, the vehicle set up to receive the £120 million National Lottery funds earmarked for the scheme, under which the trust will acquire the site for redevelopment. It is also hammering out the terms under which Wembley will operate the new stadium.

Alan Coppin, chief executive, said: "We're still in negotiations but we're down to the nitty gritty now."

The news came as Wembley reported a sharp drop in 1997 pre-tax profits, from £17.1 million to £9.4 million, as a result of a \$22.75 million (£13.86 million) arbitration award against a US subsidiary.

At the operating level, profits were up 5.5 per cent to £28.7 million on the back of a strong performance from its US race-tracks, where profits were up 10.8 per cent to £15.4 million.

In the UK, the Wembley complex experienced a 15 per cent dip in profits to £12 million. Its greyhound tracks lifted profits by almost 8 per cent to £2.8 million, although the Keith Prowse ticket business slipped 14 per cent to £600,000, suffering in comparison to the Euro '96 year.

Earnings per share came in at 11.9p (24.6p), although adjusted earnings were 40.0p (33.9p). A dividend of 3.0p (20p) will be paid on May 5.

# Wall St insiders exposed

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

US authorities expect to expose a string of insider trading rings that could trigger wide-ranging reforms of the New York Stock Exchange. Prosecutors yesterday said eight floor brokers arrested on Wednesday face long prison terms after the first criminal insider trading investigation in the exchange's 191-year history.

Insider trading is more widely practised in New York than previously thought, according to Mary Jo White, the US Attorney in Manhattan. She said: "We don't think the activity is isolated to these particular floor brokers."

The investigation deeply embarrassed the exchange and will prompt new calls for reform, including a switch from open outcry to electronic trading.

The crackdown is part of a heightened effort by federal prosecutors, the SEC and the exchange to strengthen investor confidence in the fairness of US stock markets.

Prosecutors will attempt to make an example of the eight floor brokers. If convicted, they face maximum penalties of 25 years in prison and fines of up to \$2.25 million (£1.36 million) each. There are 1,366 brokers on the exchange floor. They execute orders phoned in by clients and banks, giving them advance warning of big selling or buying waves.

The eight charges men illegally traded on their own account, buying and selling shares before executing client orders. The scheme had been in operation since 1993.

# Barclays gives jobs boost to Sunderland

EMPLOYMENT prospects in Sunderland received a fillip yesterday when Barclays Bank announced plans to create up to 2,000 jobs at a new telephone banking centre. Barclays said that it intended to recruit locally for the staff needed by the Barclaycall centre that it intends to open at the Dordford International Business Park in the first quarter of 1999.

Dordford will be Barclays' third telephone centre. It has similar, though smaller, operations at Coventry and Salford. The bank said that it expected its total of 600,000 Barclaycall customers to grow by 1 million over the next two years. Not all of the Sunderland jobs will be full-time, although Barclays said that it was impossible yet to say how many permanent posts would be created. A spokesman said that work at call-centres tended to be arranged around shift patterns. The jobs announcement is thought to be the biggest in the area since Nissan, the carmaker, arrived in 1984. Unemployment in Sunderland is 10.200, or 7.8 per cent of the workforce.

# Sharman's pay leaps

COLIN SHARMAN, the senior UK partner of KPMG, the accountancy firm, saw his total pay rise to £904,000 from £771,000, according to the annual report published yesterday. The average profit per partner rose 24 per cent to £266,000. The firm, spurned two weeks ago in an attempted merger with Ernst & Young, said fee income in the first quarter of the current year is running 18 per cent ahead of first quarter of the previous year. Total fees rose to £177 million from £150 million.

# Ashanti cuts payout

ASHANTI Goldfields, the world's cheapest gold producer, has cut its dividend, following in the footsteps of other major gold miners including Newmont, Placer Dome and Freeport McMoran. The move follows the collapse of the gold price last year. Pre-tax profits fell from \$60.1 million (£36.5 million) to \$55.7 million in 1997. Earnings per share slipped from 0.64c to 0.50c and the dividend is being cut from 0.375c to 0.20c. The Ghanaian company increased gold production by 16 per cent last year while the cost fell by 11 per cent.

# BA sued by easyJet

BRITISH AIRWAYS faces a High Court challenge over its plans to set up a low-cost airline. The "no-frills" airline easyJet yesterday served a writ against BA, which it claims will subsidise the new Go company. Low-cost airlines such as easyJet, Ryanair and Debonair allege the new operation will squeeze out competition before driving up fares. BA said it established Go in response to the growing market for low cost travel adding: "We are confident the new airline will add to consumer choice and all of Go's operations will be lawful."

# Lex fears dip in demand

DEMAND for cars is likely to be adversely affected by higher interest rates this year, with growth unlikely to match the 8 per cent achieved in 1997, Andy Harrison, chief executive of Lex Services, said yesterday. In the year to December 31, exceptional losses of £19.4 million associated with the sale and restructuring of dealerships dragged pre-tax profits down to £44 million from £51.6 million in 1996. A final dividend of 10.7p lifts the total to 17.5p (16p).

# Morgan Sindall ahead

MORGAN SINDALL, the specialist construction group whose chairman is Sir Derek Hornby, lifted pre-tax profits 40 per cent to £7.26 million in 1997. Earnings per share rose to 16.38p, from 13.13p. A 3.58p final dividend makes 5.26p (4.2p). Turnover rose 7 per cent, to £391 million, with acquisitions doubling the contribution from the regional contracting business, to £184 million. The company had net cash of £18.4 million at the year-end. The shares rose 7p to 208 1/2 p.

# Casino wins African slot

LONDON CLUBS International, the casino group, has gained a toehold in South Africa's Bejing gaming market after winning a licence to operate a casino near Johannesburg. The Emfuleni Safari Resort consortium, in which London Clubs has a 20 per cent stake, is to develop a £630 million (£78 million) leisure complex in the Vaal River. London Clubs, which will invest between £3 million and £4 million, will receive a management fee for operating the casino.

# Lionheart in the black

LIONHEART, the bathroom goods manufacturer, has clawed its way back to pre-tax profits of £1.69 million in 1997, from losses of £12.7 million in 1996, on sales slightly up from £19.53 million to £20.01 million. Earnings per share were 1.86p (22.35p loss); excluding effects of non-recurring items, earnings were 1.24p (1.33p loss). A 0.3p final dividend makes 0.4p. There was no dividend in 1996. Mark Flatman, Lionheart chief executive, says that he is optimistic on 1998 prospects.

Currency	Bank	Rate	Bank	Rate
Australia \$	Bank	2.54	Japan Yen	224.57
Austria Sch	Bank	2.87	Malta	0.65
Belgium F	Bank	20.54	Netherlands Gld	3.362
Canada \$	Bank	14.72	New Zealand \$	3.00
Cyprus Cypst	Bank	2.62	Norway Kr	13.06
Denmark Kr	Bank	6.917	Portugal Esc	317.97
Finland Mkn	Bank	11.98	S. Africa Rand	7.56
France Fr	Bank	6.56	Spain Ptas	204.22
Germany Dm	Bank	10.47	Sweden Kr	14.02
Greece Dr	Bank	3.15	Switzerland Fr	2.57
Hong Kong \$	Bank	4.93	Taiwan Nts	382.77
India Rupee	Bank	12.28	USA \$	1.750
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# Cultivating friends at the Pru



COMMENTARY  
by our City Editor

Sir Peter Davis must have quickly come to regret his decision to venture onto television in the guise of a guardian angel. As Helen Liddell launched into her campaign of naming and shaming the guilty parties in the pensions industry, with the Prudential high on the list, Sir Peter's posturing looked peculiarly ill-judged.

But he is making moves to reinstate his halo. His plans to abandon commission-based pay for the Pru's sales force will leave his rivals with little option but to follow.

It does not take a man of Sir Peter's commercial intellect to suspect that as long as salesman are paid on the basis of what they sell, there are some who will be tempted to make sales they should not make. The dreadful pensions mis-selling saga, with at least 500,000 victims identified so far, was occasioned not by the salesman's ignorance or mistakes but by their desire to earn commission.

The Pru's provisions for compensating victims of this enthusiastic sales drive has now soared to £450 million, and that is before costing the aggravation to Sir Peter. It requires a certain robustness of spirit, or particularly thick skin, to sustain a place among the nation's great and good — Sir Peter chairs the Government's Welfare to Work project — while being castigated for your firm's failings.

But the recent discount has prompted Sir Peter to drastically

rethink the work practices which he inherited at the Pru. His explanation that "We are changing the culture of the direct sales force from hunters to farmers" will resonate with many who have in the past felt themselves to be the quarry. They may wonder why, if Sir Peter recognised that this was the definition of the way his sales team operated, he did not attempt to change it sooner.

A change in remuneration policy may not in itself produce the farmers that Sir Peter wants, able to nurture their customers rather than rob them. It may take time, and the recruitment of a different breed of individuals, to achieve that. But the aim is to offer a high basic pay and a bonus based on the long-term measure of customer service.

The man from the Pru used to be regarded as a trusted friend and that is the relationship that many financial services companies would like to establish with their customers. Having signed up the friendship, of course, they would like to sell everything from insurance and mortgages to pensions and savings plans. Friendship has many definitions, but at least if it is influenced by commission it stands more chance of success.

With the private sector likely to be called on to handle more and more of individuals' financial security, it is imperative that there should be no risk of a repeat of the pensions fiasco. Stakeholder pensions and Isas promise to bring a bonanza for those companies that have the government seal of approval on their products. This fact will not have passed Sir Peter as he decided that his halo could be allowed to slip no further.

## Hacking into a flawed system

Remember Peter Young? He was the Morgan Grenfell fund manager who swapped his enthusiasm for spivvy Scandinavian companies for a passion for gherkins when the Serious Fraud Office began looking into his activities. There are some who would argue that amassing a collection of pickles

does not amount to insanity but Ernest Saunders would probably disagree.

Anyhow, a sharp reminder of Mr Young's colourful past came yesterday with a fierce rebuke from the gentlemen at Imro. No, they were not criticising Mr Young, it was his former compliance officer who came in for the ticking off and a hefty bill for costs. Bruce Hacking is being blamed for not telling Imro of his concerns over Mr Young's investment activities, which eventually cost the bank more than £180 million as it compensated investors for the money Mr Young had thrown away on their behalf.

Mr Hacking is not the only one in Imro's sights over the Young affair. Keith Percy, who was chief executive of the Morgan Grenfell fund management business, was booted out of his job in August 1996 and has been something of a non-person ever since. He is still believed to be involved in plea

bargaining with Imro as to his fate. Both men were at fault in that they failed to spot what Peter Young was up to but can they be at fault for not telling Imro of the fact that they were being duped? Even the most law-abiding compliance officer may not be able to do his job effectively when up against a brilliant brain bent on beating the system. Percy and Hacking were well aware that Young was shovelling investors' money into unquoted stocks and when they saw the level top 30 per cent, they knew it was time to do so. But there does seem to be a falling with a system that, eighteen months after he was sacked, still has Keith Percy strung up in limbo.

He apparently has a choice of settling for an Imro-imposed suspension or heading to a tribunal with the prospect of unquantified, but inevitably high, legal costs. While there is likely to be little weeping for Percy and his lost £1.5 million bonus, there should be some concern over a system that leaves an individual's life on hold for so long.

## A catalogue of woes from Argos

With a new chief executive comes a new big idea. Argos did not quite mean what it seemed to be saying about home shopping being the shape of the future. No, what it really meant was that a catalogue is a jolly useful adjunct to a national network of shops.

The problem for Stuart Rose is that his analysis does not nullify that of Lord Wolfson of Sunningdale, nor the reason why Lord W is keen to put Argos together with his GUS.

The Rose philosophy, which includes a return to the emphasis on price competitiveness which used to be critical to the Argos proposition, may be a perfectly reasonable recipe for rebuilding

the business. But what became clear yesterday was how far that business has been allowed to slip from its glory days. The list of problems was as unedifying as the Argos catalogue has become. There was good reason for the timing of the GUS swoop.

Putting the two businesses together would create a strong force for the market which, just a few days ago, Argos saw as all-important. With no other contenders for the company, it may be that Schroders will be able to squeeze a slightly higher price out of GUS but do not expect a sudden fit of generosity from Lord Wolfson.

Stuart Rose has made a good start to what is likely to be a brief career at Argos. He sounded convincing as, having detailed its failings, he mapped out the future for the company. But he could not destroy the logic of the bid. All that he can fight on is price.

## Wilted sage

IS THE magic of Warren Buffett wearing off. Not only did he manage to buy into Nike just before its latest troubles, but also the shine seems to be dulling on his investment in silver. When it emerged that the Sage of Omaha had bought \$900 million worth of the metal, its price jumped to \$7.90 an ounce. Since then production has been stepped up and the froth has gone out of the market. Yesterday's London fix was less than \$6.05.

# FTSE 100 aim for Liberty International

BY MARIANNE CURPHEY

LIBERTY International, the financial services group chaired by Donald Gordon, the South African insurance magnate, yesterday said it was actively seeking inclusion in the FTSE 100 index of leading shares.

Liberty International is currently capitalised at more than £1.8 billion, but would need to be worth between £2.5 billion to £3 billion to qualify for inclusion. It has capital resources of £2.6 billion, including cash balances of almost £500 million.

The shares rose 13p to 575p after the company unveiled a 20 per cent increase in operating profit to £142 million for the year to December 31. Liberty International has a financial services division and the 72 per cent-owned subsidiary, Capital Shopping Centres, and Capital & Counties, a wholly owned property subsidiary.

Of the full-year operating profit, the UK shopping centres contributed £94.3 million, UK commercial property contributed £36.4 million, but the financial services division's losses

deepened to £6.5 million (£5.8 million). The market welcomed the news that Liberty International was seeking a FTSE 100 index listing as a priority. David Fitchel, managing director, said inclusion in the FTSE 100 might be achieved by an acquisition, or an increase in the price of the company's shares. The company has been on the lookout for an acquisition since it sold a 50 per cent stake in Sun Life in 1995.

Donald Gordon's Liberty Life of South Africa holds 69 per cent of Liberty International and Mr Fitchel conceded that any acquisition funded by the issue of new shares might lead to a dilution of the parent company's stake.

Analysts said Liberty International was likely to be interested in buying UK life mutual companies. Alternatively, after Mr Gordon's announcement last August of his intention to restructure the Liberty companies, Liberty International might buy a company from Liberty Life.

## Lasmo's oil finds exceed production

BY CARL MORRISSEED

LASMO, the oil exploration group, found more than twice as much oil as it produced last year. Big discoveries in Pakistan and Libya and a \$453 million (£275 million) acquisition in Venezuela, helped to lift its proven reserves by 479 million barrels, to 1.1 billion barrels.

Lasmo shares rose 20 1/2p, to 277 1/2p, in spite of a 12 per cent dip in operating profit, to £184 million, because of lower oil prices and lower average production. Net profit fell from £67 million to £48 million, but Lasmo is raising the payout by 15 per cent, to 2.3p for the year.

The company plans to shed its Italian interests as part of a drive to trim the portfolio of weaker prospects. It has already pulled out of Gabon and Colombia and yesterday it said that its 25 per cent stake in the Tempa Rossa field in Southern Italy is under review.

Lasmo's oil production averaged 167,000 barrels per day last year and reached its production target of 200,000 bpd by the year end.

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## S&N hurt by strength of sterling

BY MARTIN BARROW

SMITH & NEPHEW, the orthopaedics and dressings company, has warned investors that adverse currency movements will again have a severe impact on profits and margins in the current year.

Yesterday the company reported a fall in pre-tax profits to £152.4 million from £178.7 million for the year to the end of December despite a 5 per cent rise in underlying sales. Adverse exchange rates reduced profits by £21 million, the company said.

S&N manufactures most of its products in Britain and America, with exports feeding into European and Asian markets where currencies have been weaker. Of total sales of £1.05 billion, continental Europe accounted for £201.6 million and the Africa, Asia and Australasia regions £188.5 million last year.

The total dividend is lifted to 6.2p a share from 6p, with a final 3.8p. Underlying earnings were 1p a share, down 2 per cent.

Tempus, page 32

## Emap wins battle for Hanson's Melody FM

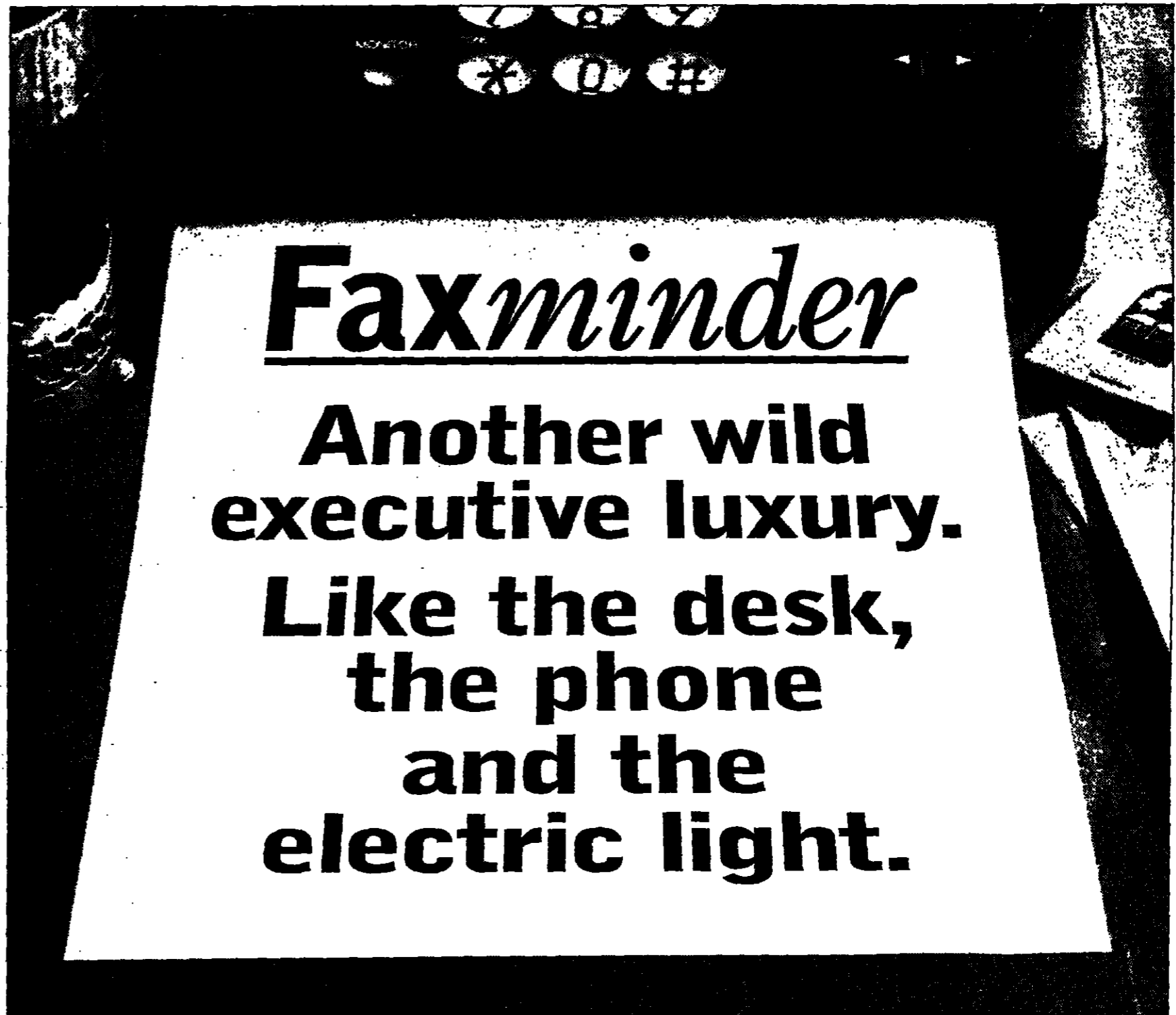
EMAP, the magazines, radio and exhibitions group, has won the battle to buy Lord Hanson's London radio station, Melody FM, with a £25 million bid (Raymond Spoddy writes).

The station, which made an operating profit of £20,000 on its turnover of £3.6 million in its last financial year, was launched in 1990, largely in response to Lord Hanson's desire to be able to enjoy an "easy-listening station" based on the North American model on his way home from the office. In

the early days, he personally supervised the music playlist.

Melody has since gone for a broader audience and now regularly draws nearly a million adult listeners a week.

Melody attracted five bids in excess of £20 million. Interest in it was high because there are no plans for further FM stations in London under existing technology. Hanson, which has largely divested interests outside its core building materials business, will book an exceptional credit of £35 million.



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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Stock Market Writer of the Year

Lasmo's big leap leads shares to new heights



Thomas Chambers, left, finance director, and Ben Anderson, a director, share shares in Robert Walters rise 58p to 548 1/2 p

SHARE PRICES closed at another high after a clutch of encouraging trading statements from blue chip companies. However, it was a something of a hetero-skelter performance, with the FTSE 100 index experiencing a 78.2-point turnaround after recovering from an uncertain start. The index touched an all-time trading high of 5,784.5 before ending 19.7 up at a record close of 5,764.8 as a total of 862 million shares changed hands.

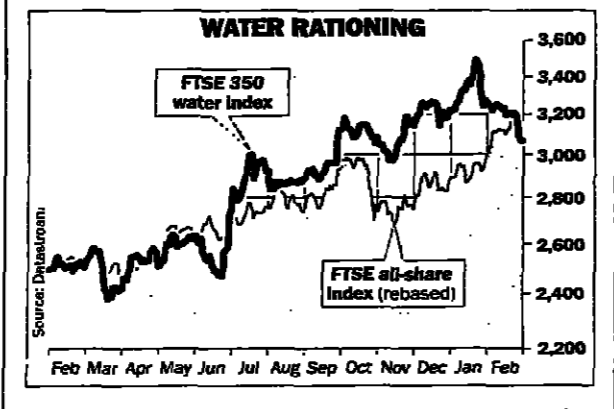
Lasmo enjoyed the biggest rise among the top 100 companies, with the price rising 20 1/2 p, or almost 8 per cent, to 277 1/2 p in spite of a drop in profits. Brokers remain impressed by the oil group's exploration programme, which will provide foundations for long-term growth. Lasmo is now capitalised at £2.68 billion. That compares with its £2.78 billion price tag of its nearest rival, Enterprise Oil, up 8p at 560p.

Abbey National took some of the recent shine off the banking sector. It fell 100p to £12.20 as full-year results failed to impress. Standard Chartered, the subject of bid speculation on Wednesday, retreated 4p to 87 1/2 p. Halifax rose 1p to 93 1/2 p. It is rumoured to be looking at suitable acquisitions.

Morgan Stanley placed 2 million shares at 333p. Speculative buying continued to drive Signet, up a further 2p, to 38 1/2 p, as 11.06 million shares changed hands. Whispers earlier this week suggested that a US retailer may be poised to offer 50p a share. Argos - the target of a £1.6 billion bid from Great Univer-

"reduce" to "neutral", in spite of three profit warnings in just over a year which have seen the shares slump to 338p. Merrill reckons that much of the bad news is out of the way. Asda, which has had merger talks with Safeway in the past, rose 4 1/2 p to 205 1/2 p. Elsewhere among food retailers, J Sainsbury fell 3p to 467p and Somerfield slipped 3 1/2 p to 298p, while Tesco firmed 2p to 522p and Kwik Save 3 1/2 p to 344p.

Ryan Hotels, up sharply in recent weeks, shed 3p to 71 1/2 p as hopes of a reverse takeover from Doyle Hotel Group was ruled out. Doyle is a privately owned Dublin rival that recently acquired its third hotel in Washington DC. Brokers have said that such a takeover would have resulted in a combined group with 19 hotels, 12 of them in Ireland. Doyle last night told The Times that it would not be making a bid. Better than expected full-year results lifted Robert Walters 58p to 548 1/2 p. Collins Stewart, the company's broker, has lifted its forecast of current-year pre-tax profits by £1.1 million, to £115 million. It says that it cannot keep pace with the growth that the finance and information technology consultant is achieving and has set a price target of 600p for the shares.



The water companies gave a cautious thumbs-up to the industry regulator's period-one-off cut in their prices in the year 2000. The cut would be followed by annual price caps. Shares in water companies, which have been under a cloud while awaiting this review, surged ahead. Anglian raked 51p to 843p. Hyder 23p to 930p. Severn Trent 35p to 929p. South West Water 21p to 398 1/2 p. Thames 50p to 895p. United Utilities 29p to 799p. Wessex 15p to 481p and Yorkshire 12 1/2 p to 505p.

Nigel Hawkins, who follows the utilities for Williams de Broe, the broker, says on water charges: "A reduction of 10 per cent is now seen as par for the course". The outcome of the report also allays fears about a confrontation between water companies and the industry regulator. Brokers are optimistic about the sector. Most of the proceeds from the £4 billion battle for control of Energy Group are now expected to be ploughed back into water companies.

MAJOR INDICES

Table of major stock indices including New York (midday), Tokyo, Hong Kong, Amsterdam, Sydney, Frankfurt, Singapore, Brussels, Paris, Zurich, London, and various regional indices.

RECENT ISSUES

Table of recent stock issues including Athlone Extrusions, Bass B, Diageo B, Eurochem Energy, Eurotel 01/03 Wts, Monsoon, Richards Group, and Sanctuary Warrants.

RIGHTS ISSUES

Table of rights issues including Minerva n/p (100).

MAJOR CHANGES

Table of major stock price changes including RISES, FALLS, and other market movements.

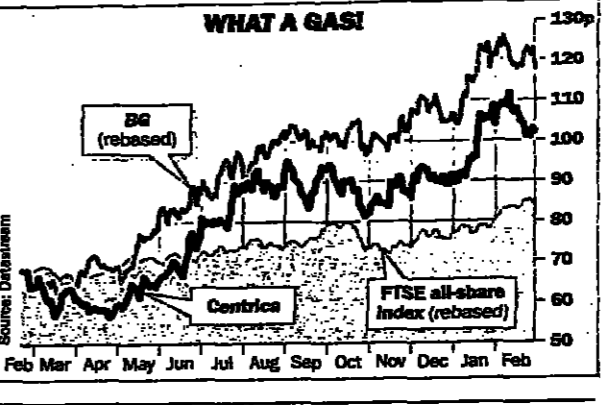
TEMPUS Solid refuge at Abbey

ABBEY NATIONAL has managed to pull off an amazing double act since its pioneering conversion in 1989. Peter Birch, the retiring chief executive, succeeded in convincing the City that Abbey had become a hard-nosed bank, while maintaining the friendly, faintly caddy image of a building society for its customers. The result has been explosive: launched at 130p, the stock today hovers around the £12.50 mark.

upper hand in a merger with NatWest is no longer so far-fetched as it once was. After a disastrous year, NatWest's management is having a tough time convincing shareholders that it can lead the bank through this time of exceptional consolidation. If Abbey was guaranteed leadership of the combined organisation, as well as retention of the brand, it might well cut a deal. Yesterday's results confirm the quality of earnings at Abbey. The bank now derives half of its profits from non-traditional business, so its 3.5 per cent share of the UK mortgage market should not cause too much concern, particularly as its share in the second half was 6.4 per cent.

Centrica, which cashed in on the cold in 1996, was hit by the warm weather in early and late 1997. However, this was almost offset by the benefits of being able to use the South Moroccan gas field in a more tax-efficient way. The shares were marked up 6 per cent as Mr Gardner revealed that a loss of £623 million was made in Centrica's first full year of trading after demerger from British Gas. The loss reflected the retreat from corrosive "take or pay" supply contracts and the windfall tax. The cash inflow before financing and exceptional items was a heartening £577 million. Working capital fell £527 million after the introduction of improved billing and better cash management, although further cuts may be harder to find.

Smith & Nephew S&N shares have become a punt on the success of Dermagraf, the company's newly developed artificial skin. If you believe in the product then the shares, now at 173 1/2 p, look cheap. If you have doubts, then there are better prospects elsewhere in the sector. With most manufacturing taking place in Britain and America, the strength of both sterling and the dollar had a severe impact. Generally prices were held at 1996 levels, forcing the company to cut costs by more than £30 million. There is a similar target for the current year. S&N's strength in so-called wound management, embracing chronic wound treatment, post-operative dressings and first aid products, is underrated, with underlying sales growth of 9 per cent being achieved last year. But if the company is to really stamp its mark on an overcrowded sector it must



make the breakthrough with Dermagraf. The question is whether competitors such as Novartis and Johnson & Johnson will allow a minor-league S&N to enjoy the fruits of its investment. Lasmo INVESTORS who chose not to worry about Lasmo's exposure to exotic countries such as Algeria, Libya and Pakistan have been amply rewarded. Last year the risk for oil explorers was not bombs and nationalisation but shortages of equipment, technical foul-ups in deep-water production and hanky panky among local politicians in southern Europe. Lasmo reckons that the political risk in countries like Libya and Algeria is outweighed by the rewards of low-cost onshore exploration. Lasmo's recent finds provide the certainty of raising its production well above current levels but the focus on areas like Algeria

and Venezuela mean that exploration risks are minimal. In Iran, the government is offering PFI-type deals where the oil company acts as contractor, guaranteed a fixed return regardless of oil price where the profit incentive is based on delivering low-cost production. That sounds less exciting than wildcat drilling off the Falklands (another Lasmo venture) but with oil prices drifting towards single-digits, oil companies need to be worried more about commercial than political risk. Lasmo's profit threshold is \$15 per barrel, not due to inefficient operations but because of past high-cost investments which have left it with a £4 per barrel depreciation charge. That is gradually flowing out of the equation, evidenced by its cash margin per barrel of £4.80 compared with a profit margin of just 76p. Lasmo looks the best play in the exploration sector and is still worth buying.

COMMODITIES

Table of commodity prices including COCOA, ROBUSTA COFFEE BS, WHITE SUGAR (FOB), and MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION.

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm) CRUDE OILS (\$/barrel FOB)

Table of crude oil prices including Brent Physical, Brent 15 day, W. Texas Intermediate, and others.

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

Table of London financial futures including Long Gill, German Govt Bond, Italian Govt Bond, Japanese Govt Bond, and others.

MONEY RATES (%)

Table of money rates including Base Rate Clearing Bank 7%, Discount Rate 8%, and Treasury Bills.

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Table of European money deposits including 7 day, 1 month, 3 month, 6 month, and 12 month rates for various currencies.

LIFE OFFERS

Table of life insurance offers including various policies and rates.

LIFE OFFERS (continued)

Table of life insurance offers (continued) including various policies and rates.

LIFE OFFERS (continued)

Table of life insurance offers (continued) including various policies and rates.

LIFE OFFERS (continued)

Table of life insurance offers (continued) including various policies and rates.

LIFE OFFERS (continued)

Table of life insurance offers (continued) including various policies and rates.





ANATOLE KALETSKY

# Strong pound is here to stay whether firms like it or not

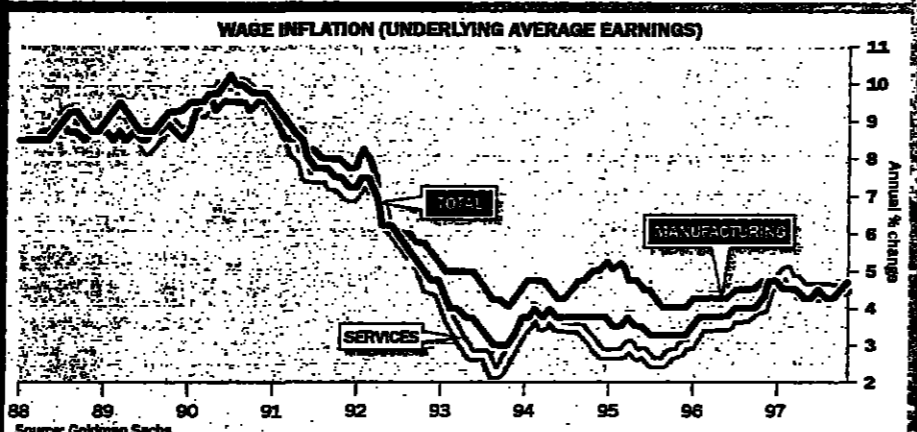
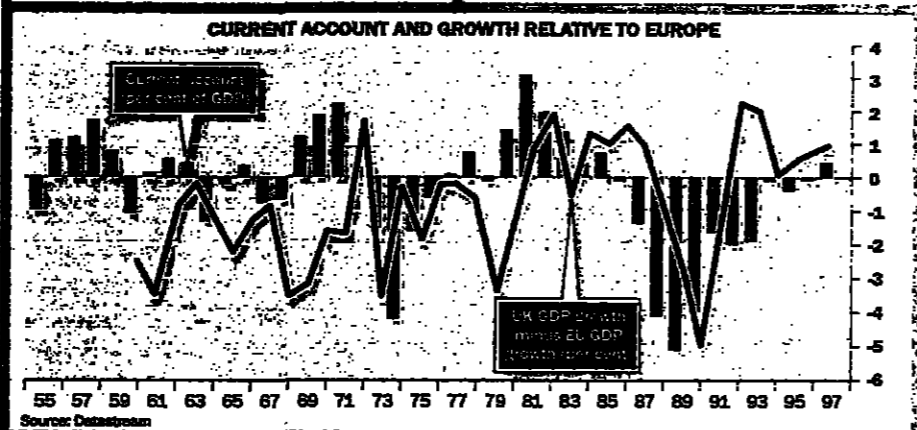
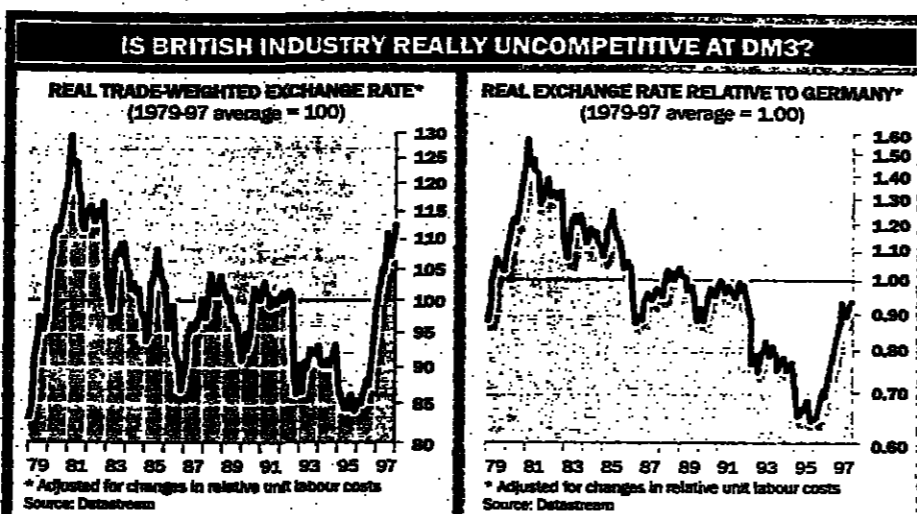
Hopes for an easing of interest rates may prove to be wishful thinking

Yesterday's surprisingly strong CBI industrial trends survey, which showed that Britain's manufacturers are enjoying stronger order books than at any time since August 1995, combined with the improved trade figures published a few hours earlier by the Government, virtually guarantees that the Bank of England will announce another increase in interest rates next Thursday. More importantly, these figures make it unlikely that interest rates will start to fall in the second half of the year, as most analysts in the City of London expect. And most importantly, they suggest that Britain's economists and industrialists may be proved wrong again in their almost unanimous belief that the pound will soon start to decline.

In making these statements, I do not wish to imply that I have any special intelligence about the Monetary Policy Committee's intentions. Nor do I want to suggest that high interest rates and a strong pound are either necessary or desirable. In fact, I have long believed that tight money and strong currencies are usually harmful. But there is a world of difference between what one may want to happen and what is likely to happen. This is a disconcerting lesson of life that most people learn when they are first denied an ice-cream by their parents at the age of two or three. But curiously, economists and captains of industry in Britain seem somehow to have evaded this learning experience.

Ask any City analyst or Birmingham businessman how he is adjusting to the strong pound and the reply is usually along the following lines: "The pound has jumped by 25 per cent since 1996. Not since the great Thatcher squeeze of 1979-82 has there been such a sharp currency appreciation. Exporters now have a choice of slashing their prices and profits or losing orders. This simply can't go on. You say that international investors may disagree? Well the Government and the Bank of England will have to change their policies. Yes, that's it — the Government must do something about it. "But what am I doing about the DM3 pound? Well, naturally I'm assuming it will go away. Yes, sterling will fall back below DM2.75 before too long."

This imaginary conversation may sound like a parody, but consider some evidence that it truly reflects the state of business opinion in Britain. Reuters recently produced a survey of



City foreign exchange forecasts. Usually forecasts of a currency or any other economic variable are based on projecting trends and cluster around whatever happens to be the latest recent level. But not in the case of sterling. Every single one of the forecasters interviewed by Reuters predicted that the pound would dramatically weaken, falling below DM2.75 by the second quarter of 1999. Considering that the pound at the time was trading at DM2.97 and was priced by the delivery market at DM2.85 for delivery in March 1999, the implication was quite startling: the forecasters were completely unanimous about the market's direction over the next two years. Not one of these seers considered that the balance of judgments represented by the market might prove right, even to within 4 per cent. Rarely in my experience has the balance of views among economists on any financial variable been so one-sided. And never, I suspect, has such a lop-sided consensus of forecasters turned out to be right. Yesterday, the CBI came out with a similar conclusion

when it released its quarterly economic forecasts. Its figures assumed that sterling would fall 6 per cent on a trade-weighted basis by the end of this year and a further 4 per cent in 1999. But what was the mechanism that would cause the pound to fall? The CBI forecast assumed no reduction in interest rates, only that they would stay at today's 7.25 per cent throughout this year. This rate is more than twice the level prevailing in Germany and the rest of continental Europe and is higher than the futures market's expectations for the end of 1998.

So why should it undermine the pound? And why does the CBI assume that interest rates will remain unchanged? The CBI may be confident that inflation is under control (and I tend to agree), but the Monetary Policy Committee has expressed a different view. All the statistics published since the last MPC meeting, including yesterday's CBI survey, have been stronger than expected. They have suggested that the economy, including the manufacturing sector, re-

mains stronger than the Bank wants to see. Is it then wise to assume that the Bank — and the markets — will react more to the CBI's worries about a future manufacturing slowdown than to the solid evidence from the high streets and the CBI's own surveys that economic activity remains quite strong? Conventional wisdom suggests three broad answers. First, the surprising resilience of manufacturing may be just a case of longer than expected lags. Once manufacturing output starts falling in earnest, the Bank will cut interest rates and this will bring down the pound. Secondly, exports may collapse, even if domestic production remains quite strong. This will cause a balance of payments crisis and a flight from the pound.

Thirdly, it may be that the manufacturing sector's survival is simply a case of "denial". Perhaps manufacturers are only maintaining their output because they believe that the pound will eventually come down. They are selling at a loss or accepting inadequate profits, only because they hope that a devaluation will eventu-

ally bail them out. If they ever became convinced that the pound was likely to remain at its present level, they would cut output, sack workers and bring about a dramatic economic slowdown. Ironically, this slowdown would, in turn, produce the easing of monetary policy and the longed-for devaluation of the pound. It is possible, however, to suggest a very different explanation for what is going on in British industry today. While manufacturing and exports are clearly suffering from the high level of interest rates and the strength of sterling, they may be coping better than most economists — and indeed most businessmen — have assumed. Closing down is not, after all, the only response available to a business hit by a rising currency. An alternative is to cut costs, improve efficiency and come up with more innovative, valuable products.

Perhaps, in their time off from whingeing about the strength of sterling, this is what many British businessmen have begun to do. After all, most operating costs in Britain remain much lower than in Germany, France, America and other competitor countries, even at the present exchange rate. The pound may have risen by 25 per cent in 18 months, but this appreciation started from an exceptionally undervalued level, as shown in the top two charts. Indeed, Britain is still rather more competitive against both Germany and America than it was in the ERM period and the early 1980s. Against Germany it is also more competitive than it has been, on average, in the past two decades.

Britain's trade has also remained surprisingly strong, with the big deficit in "visible" trade fully offset last year by a surplus in services. Considering Britain's unusually low unemployment and high domestic growth relative to Europe, this was a remarkable performance. Finally, there is the question of costs. If British manufacturers were really as hard-pressed as they claim, why, as the bottom chart shows, are they paying their workers ever-higher wages? Industrialists will generally prefer a weaker currency, even if they can cope quite well with a pound at DM3. For the most efficient companies, a lower pound makes their operations even more profitable. For the laggards, it offers a comfortable cushion against the unpleasant exigencies of a competitive world.

Only hindsight will tell us whether Britain can respond to the challenge of a strong currency, as Germany, Japan and America have in the past. But on the evidence available today, it does seem that British industry may cope with a strong pound better than many analysts (including myself) expected — and far better than industrialists themselves find it convenient to claim. For better or worse I suspect we are about to find out.

# BTR's former chief rebuilds reputation where career began



Jackson: meteoric rise

The feeling of *déjà vu* must be one that Alan Jackson, the Australian former chief executive of BTR, the building products group, understands well. The circumstances may have changed slightly, his hair is a little grayer, and some of the companies have different names. But — make no mistake — Jackson has done this before.

Having been back in Australia for almost two years since his departure from BTR, Mr Jackson is in the process of once again proving his reputation as an empire builder. In the 1970s and 1980s it was BTR Nylex, an Australian associate business of BTR, which Jackson moulded from a belt company in the late 1960s into a multibillion dollar conglomerate. After receiving a dose of Jackson medicine, it was swallowed up by the parent group in 1995 for AS4.5 billion (then £2 billion) in one of Australia's biggest corporate takeovers. Mr Jackson's hometown success helped his meteoric rise. He became chief executive of BTR in 1991. This time around the company is Austrium, and the corporate raider, about to turn 62, is up to his old tricks.

Mr Jackson bought into Austrium, a modest corporate leasing business and formerly part of BTR Nylex, in 1995 in an AS12 million deal that valued the group at about AS50 million. At the time his interest was described as something for

him to do as he moved into "semi-retirement". But just two years later Austrium has entered Australia's top 100 companies, worth more AS760 million. In the 1996-97 financial year alone, Jackson spent more than AS160 million on takeovers and has since spent a further AS80 million. Austrium's latest bold venture is a AS121 million takeover bid for National Consolidated, the Australian engineering and building group, although the bid looks unlikely to succeed at this point. Australian investors seem to have a blind faith in Jackson who was afforded almost cult status in his home country before coming to Britain. On arriving back in Australia in 1996, Mr Jackson admitted that he had felt somewhat of an outsider during his time

at BTR in Britain, complaining of an old boys' network and dishonesty among City analysts. In turn, analysts who covered BTR during the Jackson years describe him as a "number cruncher" who never really lived up to his faded reputation. "He came from Down Under promising so much after the stories we had heard about his record but looking back he didn't really live up to it," one analyst said. "In hindsight, Alan Jackson could not have run BTR in a worse manner if he had tried."

By the time Jackson returned to Australia, BTR was heading for trouble. Two years later BTR, one of Britain's 1980s stock market darlings, still finds itself unloved. The group is testing the patience of investors, with five profit warnings in four years and shares that have greatly underperformed the FTSE 100 index. BTR is seeking buyers for businesses valued at about £2.8 billion in order to reduce debt levels. These include many of BTR's Australian building products operations, a fact that has not gone unnoticed by Jackson. BTR recently appointed JB Ware and Son and BZW Australia as joint lead managers to handle a potential demerger of the operation. It would be the ultimate irony if Jackson was able to buy back the operations he once oversaw at BTR.

KATHY LIPARI

## BUSINESS LETTERS

### Moratorium on gas power stations is empty pledge

From Mr Garry Foreman

Sir, "Gas power station gets green light" (report, February 19) again shows the pledge for a moratorium on gas power stations by the Labour Government to the deep-mined coal industry last December may turn out (as we miners fear) a paper exercise.

Once again the Energy Minister has given consent for a new combined heat and power (CHP) plant to be built

and come on line no more than two months after the announcement of the moratorium in the Commons by the Prime Minister himself. John Battle then states: "It's what Government wants to see — energy by investing in up-to-date technology." Come on, Minister — if it's up-to-date technology you want, then how about investing in clean coal technology at the coal-fired power stations that are already in use.

Coal is a resource this nation can ill afford to lose and, if nurtured properly, will still be in use well into the next millennium. Let us use coal and not lose coal.

Yours faithfully,  
GARRY FOREMAN,  
Branch Secretary,  
Nacods (Yorkshire Area),  
Prince of Wales Colliery,  
Parkside,  
Pontefract,  
West Yorkshire.

### Still marketing gas

From the Director of Marketing and Sales, Northern Electric

Sir, The report in today's edition of The Times (report, February 24) that "Ofgas, the gas regulator, has suspended Northern Electric marketing of gas" is not true and is highly misleading. This company has not been suspended from marketing gas either via doorstep selling or any other method. What is true is that one sales

agency of the many retained by Northern Electric has been suspended by the company, not by Ofgas, from selling gas on the doorstep for 14 days while a review takes place of its marketing methods, following a complaint made in the Birmingham area.

We welcome the fact that Ofgas is also conducting its own investigation into this complaint. Northern Electric has received over 400,000 applications from customers and the

numbers of customers contacted by doorstep selling agents runs into millions. This is the first incident we have had involving this agent and it and any other complaints we receive will be investigated and appropriate action taken. Yours faithfully,  
D.A. PEARSON,  
Director of Marketing and Sales,  
Northern Electric,  
Carlisle House,  
Market Street,  
Newcastle NE1 6NE.

# Scotched

AS IF Brian Souter was not enough of a hero to the people of Perth, there will now be positions posted at the Kickers' feast of the sartorially challenged Stagecoach chairman. After the departure of United Distillers & Vintners, and with CGU (the merged General Accident and Commercial Union) choosing London for its base, the bus and train group now has the Scottish city's most important company head office.

Yesterday's decision by the Diageo spirits unit puts about 200 jobs at risk, at least 120 of which are in Perth. The coun-

ty and Roseanna Cunningham, the local MP, called it a "blow for Perth and for the whisky industry in Scotland". And in Scotland it brings memories of when the Guinness side of Diageo — then run by Ernest Saunders — ratted on a promise to locate its HQ north of the border.

Diageo, though, refutes that the world's largest whisky maker has any bias against Scotland. "Our top 15 customers buy 50 per cent of our products," Diageo tells me. "And they are mostly in the South of England." It backs this up by pointing out that the average distance of each of these customers from Perth is 375 miles, while they are 108 miles from Harlow, the new HQ. I'm sure Stagecoach would lay on transport.

## New roles

VISCOUNT CHANDOS is no stranger to holding down multiple roles. While a merchant banker at Kleinwort Benson and Bots & Co, he managed to find time to be a Labour front-bench spokesman on Treasury matters in the Lords. Since last May he has stepped back from the front benches and merchant banking. But yesterday



he returned with a vengeance. Not only is he to be an executive director of Video Networks, the digital TV venture that launches in the autumn, but also chairman of Media-Key, the training group that bought John Cleese's Video Arts. He is still active in the Lords. "I get whipped regularly," he tells me.

## Past record

THE appointment of a new head of US institutional sales in the London office of Prudential-Bache Securities would hardly raise an eyebrow, were it not for the appointee's rather colourful past. Fans of popular music will no doubt recall Graham Elliot from his time as

keyboard player in Gordon and the Gekkos (sic), an amusing 1980s rock group which also featured Steve Priest, the former bassist of The Sweet, and various past members of the Electric Light Orchestra.

The Gekkos had a glorious if brief career. Having made their debut at a London Business School requilla party, they appeared at the Hard Rock Café and on The Money Programme. All good record companies failed to get them signed.

## Upright aim

JASON LEONARD, one of the few England front row for-

wards not to be facing suspension, is to join two former rugby union internationals — Mike Skinner and Brian Moore — in a charity event that really lives up to the cliché about rugby players. Whitbread, in association with Cityscreen on Reuters, is backing a beer drinking challenge to be held at various Hogshead bars around the City.

Teams of eight will be invited to sample and identify various brews, with the proceeds of the event going to the Richard Langhorn Trust, which provides sporting facilities for underprivileged and disabled children. Unlike wine-tasting, with beer the idea is not to spit out the sample.

JASON NISSÉ



Jason Leonard is to sample beers — and all for charity

# ARGOS plc Shareholder information update

## ARGOS plc releases FIRST defence document

To hear your Board's advice call 0800 44 42 44

The Directors of ARGOS plc are the persons responsible for this advertisement. Those Directors confirm that, to the best of their knowledge and belief, having taken all reasonable care to ensure that such is the case, the information contained in this advertisement is in accordance with the facts and does not omit anything likely to affect the import of such information. The Directors of ARGOS plc accept responsibility accordingly.



"This awful weather is getting me down"

THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

Main table containing unit trust prices, organized by fund type and name. Includes columns for fund name, price, and other financial metrics.

Advertisement for 'THE OZONE LAYER RESTS ON YOUR BOARDROOM TABLE.' by BSI, featuring a globe and text about environmental management systems.

Vertical text on the left margin: A, P, C, S, V, D, J, G, R, H, B, P, R, O, T, E, C, T, I, O, N, S.

Vertical text on the right margin: B, P, R, O, T, E, C, T, I, O, N, S.

12/1/2015

# Modest gains at the close

**TRADING PERIOD:** Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

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BRITISH FUNDS	

## EULER

Facts do not  
cease to exist  
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are ignored.

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WEEKEND CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment...

ELSEWHERE: Cardiff: David Almond's...

LIVERPOOL: The Royal Liverpool...

MANCHESTER: Veteran maestro...

LONDON GALLERIES: Barbican...

THE MAGISTRATE: Richard...

PETER PAN: Ian McKellen plays...

ROMEO AND JULIET: Brave attempt...

BLOOD RUNNERS: Phono (171-389...

THE ICE STORM (15): Connects...

LA MAMAN ET LA PUTAIN (18): A...

THE UGLY (18): Psychiatrist tries...

THE BUTCHER BOY (15): Scary...

AMYSTAD (15): African slaves...

DESPERATE MEASURES (15): Improved...

THE EDGE (15): Can heroine...

THE BUTCHER BOY (15): Scary...

AMYSTAD (15): African slaves...

DESPERATE MEASURES (15): Improved...

THE EDGE (15): Can heroine...

THE BUTCHER BOY (15): Scary...

AMYSTAD (15): African slaves...

LEEDS: The extensive British tour...

LIVERPOOL: The Royal Liverpool...

MANCHESTER: Veteran maestro...

LONDON GALLERIES: Barbican...

THE MAGISTRATE: Richard...

PETER PAN: Ian McKellen plays...

ROMEO AND JULIET: Brave attempt...

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Laughter lost in transit

Comedy comes from communication...

Quite what the reaction to Ogata is...

Ultimately each vignette is centred...

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More Bennett than Bean: Issey Ogata presents eight characters...

talks more of the universal language...

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CYMBELINE: 'the hit of the season'

THE BUTCHER BOY: 'The hit of the season'

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THE BUTCHER BOY: 'The hit of the season'

# Take the politics out of the dome

The Prime Minister, no less, commands us to stop stripping at the dome. Peter Mandelson, who is slightly lesser but not much, assures us that the Star Trek-meets-Mr-Blobby rides revealed this week for the Millennium "Experience" will make British designers the toast of the civilized world. Captains of industry are paraded like sinners at a prayer meeting to tell us of their genuine conversions on the road to South London. The message to Britain is clear. Put away that cynicism! Roll out the bunting! We don't want to force you, but we think you ought to cheer.

It took me a while to work out why this sinister tone of bullying patriotic banter seemed vaguely familiar, and when I had the answer I felt a little ashamed of myself. After all, Tony Blair is not Stalin, and new Labour Britain is not a police state, despite its promising nanny tendencies. Nevertheless, the echoes were unmistakable. About 20 years ago a sensational book was published. Called *Testimony*, it purported to

be the memoirs of the Soviet composer Dmitri Shostakovich, as related to a pupil who had smuggled them out of Russia.

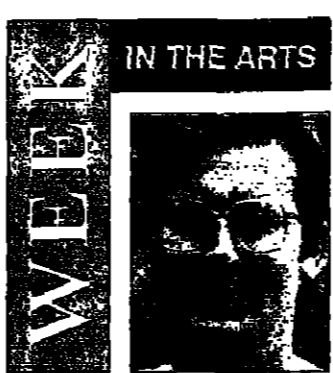
Among many extraordinary things, *Testimony* (which most scholars think is genuine) lays bare the "hidden meaning" of Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony, the one he wrote as a "Soviet artist's reply to just criticism". This "criticism" (actually a frightful public savaging by Stalin's cultural henchmen) was that Shostakovich's music was generally not supportive enough of the Soviet Union's joys and achievements. So for the Fifth Symphony Shostakovich composed a relentlessly jolly finale, and it did the trick. Stalin loved it; Shostakovich saved his skin; and for years the symphony was played as a work of tub-thumping optimism.

But *Testimony* revealed that the symphony's joy is faked. "The

rejoicing is forced, created under a threat," Shostakovich says. "It's as if someone were beating you with a stick, and saying, 'Your business is rejoicing, and you rise, shakily, and go marching off muttering, 'Our business is rejoicing'."

Well, it seems that once again a bunch of politicians is telling us that our business is rejoicing. They, apparently, have seen the future, and distilled its essence into the monster merry-go-round now going up in Greenwich. And guess what? It's rosy! War, poverty, crime, illiteracy; these are just some of the things you won't see featured in the dome's futuristic "zones". But you will be able to float through a psychedelic cave on a big rubber bed.

Of course, even flinty pessimists are prone to turn soppy on New Year's Eve — and let's face it, the millennium is only a New Year's Eve with extra aspirins. Even



RICHARD MORRISON

Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, mother of all morbid Victorian epics, has that glorious but mad exhortation to the December bells: "Ring out false pride, the civic slander and the spite... Ring in the common love of good." And was it not on

December 31, 1900, that the gloomy Thomas Hardy fancied he heard the Darkling Thrush warble of "some blessed Hope, whereof he knew and I was unaware?"

The trouble is, when poets or composers wrestle with their dark sides and emerge with a "massive hope for the future" (the famous inscription which Elgar pinned to his First Symphony) it seems touching and visionary. When politicians do it, it seems like cheap rhetoric. Instead of deploring the pervading cynicism about the dome, the Prime Minister should ask himself what causes it. The answer is that people see the dome as a political creation, run by politicians for political gain. If it were handed over to some showbiz mogul to run, we could enjoy it for the glorified funfair it is.

There is another problem with a highly politicised dome. Its chief exhibits — and notably the

boobless floozie whose innards we are all invited to examine — have necessarily been conceived on a gigantic scale. Indeed, many feel that this will be the dome's best hope of mass popularity: the "corpulent load of them buttocks" factor.

But for anybody with a feel for 20th-century history, any sort of staid architectural gigantism inevitably suggests the dread hand of a political dictator at work. From Albert Speer's designs for Hitler (he craved a mega-dome too, funnily enough) to Ceausescu's oppressive palace-fortress and Franco's creepy Valley of the Fallen, the great dictators have shared a penchant for monumentality. Perhaps they believed that such vast edifices would hide the hollows where the humanity should be.

The dome is not the plaything of dictators, but it has a similar whiff

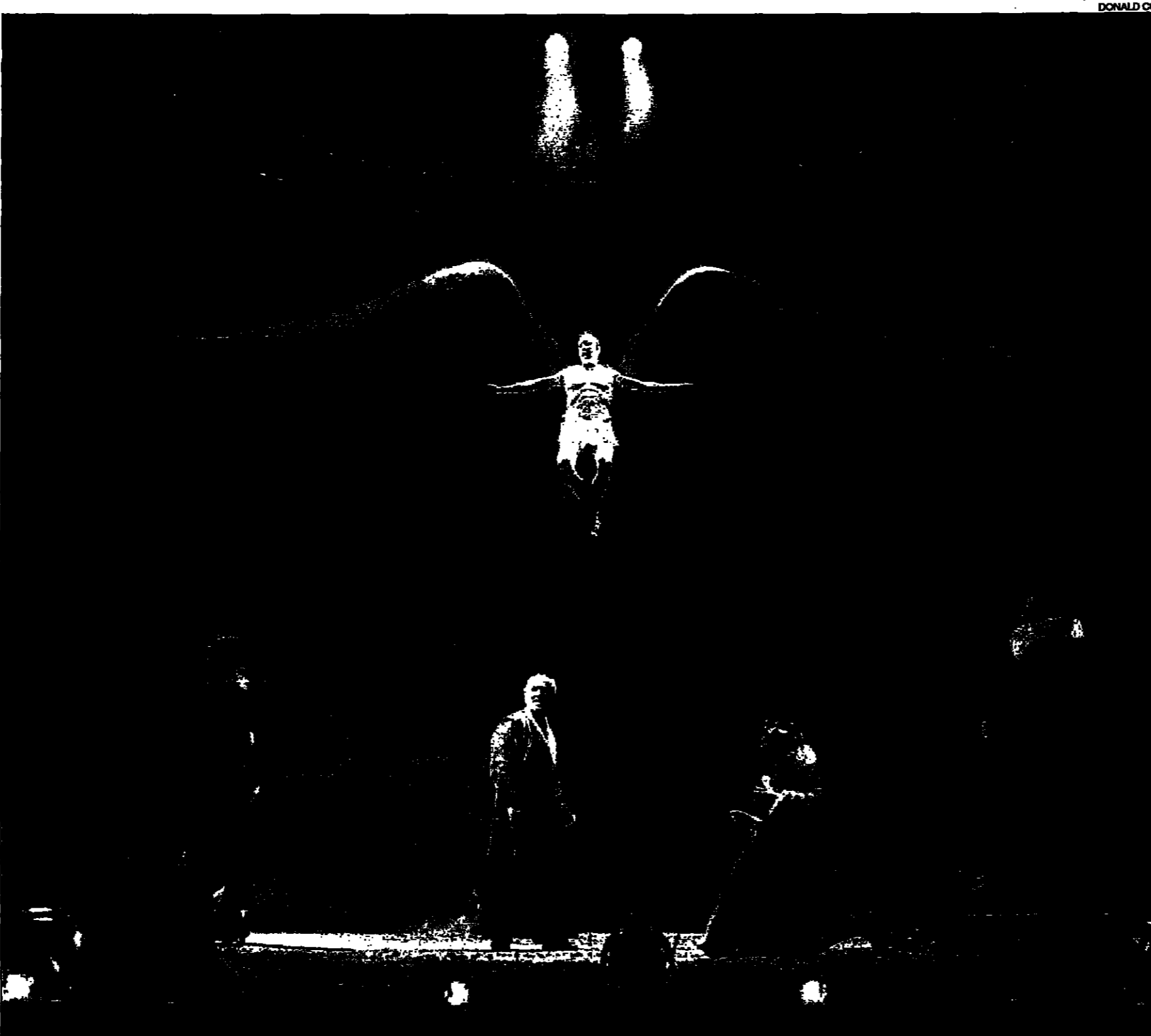
of the dilapidated about it: a *folie de grandeur* at best, a shameless electioneering stunt at worst. Still, we can't stop it now, so we might as well enjoy the scramble to make it work. Good luck to the intrepid navvies perched 200ft above the Thames Estuary, trying to pull the world's largest tent sheet over the world's biggest tent pegs. Good luck to the hundreds of human moles desperately burrowing to get the Jubilee Line to Greenwich before December 1999. Good luck to the marketing geniuses charged with filling a 6,000-seat auditorium for shows devised by Peter Gabriel. Good luck to the 12 million punters expecting to reach Greenwich on London's exciting public transport system.

The Prime Minister may be right; the time for cynicism about the dome is probably over. But the right to be supremely indifferent must be jealously guarded. At least 40 million British people will somehow struggle into the 21st century without setting foot inside the dome. You are not alone. It's a reassuring thought.

# Stuff as dreams are made on

The vast blue curtains at the back palpitate, the violet drapes on the ground seethe, and thunder and lightning go about their business with remarkable ferocity. Though the swaying boatswain irritated me with a wrong reading of a great line — "What care these roars for the name of the king?" instead of the far more pregnant "What care these roars for the name of king?" — Adrian Noble's staging of *The Tempest* begins as on the whole, it goes on. It is finely imagined, simply staged, and provokes at least as much wonder as the *Cymbeline* which the same director recently brought to the Barbican.

It also offers a notable Prospero. David Calder is not the household name he should be, nor has he the ascetic, guru-like figure of a John Wood, Derek Jacobi or John Giel-



Strange bedfellows: Scott Handy's Ariel hovers above David Calder's intelligent, vocally versatile Prospero in Adrian Noble's Stratford production of *The Tempest*

**THEATRE**  
**The Tempest**  
Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford

god. But he surprises you with the physical delicacy with which he pads about the gravelly circle that is his island kingdom, and he persistently impresses you with his emotional intelligence and vocal versatility.

More than any Prospero I have recently seen, he makes you realise what he means when he says he has a "beating mind". More than any, he leaves you feeling that his decision to forgive his evil brother and the treacherous King of Naples is a close-run thing.

"How now, moody?" he snaps at Ariel when he begs for his freedom: which is pretty rich, coming from him. Scott Handy's "airy spirit" exudes unearthly calm from a bare body which, though bulky, has a blue-white, spectral look. Calder is partly an introspective magus, partly a commanding prophet, but also a passionate, volatile man capable of swivelling from mood to mood in an instant. He can push Penny Layden's Miranda to the ground in vexation, then devotedly cradle her. He can play the benign host to the visiting goddesses at his improvised masque, then let his temper rip. Anyone seeing the play for the first time must have wondered if Prospero would end up using his wand to turn his foes into frogs.

When he relives the story of his exile for Miranda, Calder's pain and bewilderment are intense. You feel he is looking deep into a wound that is still open, still raw. Nor does he relent until Ariel's offhand admission that he would pity Prospero's enemies "were I human". It is the production's key moment. Calder's

Prospero is amazed by the remark, and even more astonished to find himself renouncing vengeance. Yet you sense a deep relief, as of a great weight cast off, when he abjures the "rough magic" that for the last 12 years has kept him superhuman. Unsurprisingly, not all the perfor-

mances match the one at the play's centre. But the comic scenes are funnier than usual, thanks to some spectacularly drunken knockabout involving Barry Stanton's bulky Stephano, Adrian Schiller's wispy Trinculo, and an Ariel able to transform himself into a wall or a

hoist while remaining invisible. Moreover, there is a strong, strange Caliban from Robert Glenister, an actor whom a less original director would probably have cast as had Alonso or worse Antonio, not as a surly cavernman with murder on his mind.

Glenister's monster is thin and lithe, intense and feral. His body is caked all over in what looks like dried lava. When he first emerges from the huge, spiky conch-shell in which he lives his eyes have a silvery-red glint, and they stay that way for the rest of the evening.

Crouched and squirming on the ground, a weird blend of mole and weasel, lynx and mongrel dog, he's a Caliban you would not wish to meet at night.

# Finely drawn from life

Lea Anderson isn't the first choreographer to be inspired by an artist. In fact, only a week after Anderson's new production for the Featherstonehaughs kicked off this year's *Spring Loaded* festival at London's Place Theatre, Yolande Smith will present a work inspired by the paintings of Leonardo da Vinci. But what is remarkable about *The Featherstonehaughs* draws on the *Sketch Books of Egon Schiele* is how convincingly Anderson brings to three-dimensional life figures which have been frozen in time in two dimensions.

The tormented Viennese artist never saw 30, thanks to the

**DANCE**

1918 influenza epidemic which also took away his pregnant wife. But he left behind not only a body of disturbing Expressionist work for the gallery wall, but also a number of sketchbooks. To Anderson, these sketches suggested choreography.

The transformation from page to stage is uncanny. The contorted, demonic figures of Schiele's pen are suddenly before us, large as life, as if all Anderson had to do was release the pause button and unleash movement.

The 70-minute work for six men is not a danced biography; more a distillation of the hellish emotions that defined the artist's abbreviated life. Like Schiele's pictures, Anderson's choreography turns the body inside out, exposing raw emotion with the audacity of meat hanging on a butcher's hook. The Featherstonehaughs are suspended in a trance of shock and despair, their haunted eyes staring into a private horrific universe, rapt with fear. Their limbs are broken as if by some unspeakable accident, Anderson claims that every single position we see has come from a painting or sketch of Schiele's, and one can believe that. But to this Anderson adds her unique rhythmic flair and telling descriptive touches: men caress their faces as if checking to see that their skin is still warm.

Most of the time the dancers are the figures in Schiele's sketchbook — writhing, erotic, surreal Boris Karloff clones — but in one protracted sequence they become the artist's models, undressing for Schiele, exposing their emotions as well as their flesh.

Somewhere in the middle Anderson's piece runs out of steam, and the point of it all finally eludes her. But the images are striking, and the Featherstonehaughs are a fascinating bunch of dancers; every one of them has a face fit for a canvas. Drustan Madden's generic pop score is no great shakes, but Sandy Powell's distressed pastel suits are simply gorgeous.

RODNEY MILNES DEBRA CRAINE

# Red under whose bed?

The drama-documentary is a format with an oddly mixed image. Its usage tends to go in phases, both in radio and television, but whereas no drama-doc can appear on a television screen without inspiring an excited debate as to whether the format is valid and whether the people portrayed really said or did everything the producers claim, the same format used in radio is accepted without a murmur.

Yet a new series that started on Wednesday amply demonstrates that radio has a greater capacity to mislead in these circumstances than television. In *The Name of Security* (Radio 4) seeks to re-examine three great espionage cases, all concerning Americans accused either of spying for the former Soviet Union or of having anti-American sympathies.

For British ears this is a pleasant change from depressing tales of sad Brits deluded into thinking that communism was the cure for all headaches. But demonstrating that even Americans are capable of spitting out the apple pie in favour of a slug of vodka is not the issue here. The difficulty is to work out

whether we are listening to real people or actors playing real people. The short answer is, both.

Wednesday's opener in the series, *The Trials of Alger Hiss*, was an excellent and at moments spellbinding re-enactment of the treason and perjury trials that Hiss, who had previously worked closely with Roosevelt and who

surely, simply switch on the radio and start listening. During the course of the first few minutes they would have heard Hiss opening his evidence to the House Un-American Activities Committee. Only later would the listener realise that in addition to the real voices of Hiss, Richard Nixon and other key figures, the programme uses actors to convey the words of these people.

I was confused as to whether, for example, Hiss's opening words to the committee — "My name is Alger Hiss, I am here at my own request to deny..." — were recorded at the time or spoken by an actor for this programme. Recordings of the hearing exist and the ability to make recorded sounds appear either more or less recent than they really are is now a staple of the radio sound engineer's repertoire.

In short, *The Trials of Alger Hiss* had all the elements of drama and suspense one could have hoped for, plus an element of mystery that tends to creep in too often when programmes become too clever for their own good.

Beethoven's only opera is a tough nut for the grandest companies to crack — just casting it for a start — and must be the stiffest challenge English Touring Opera has yet set itself. In the most important respects Wednesday's first night at the Cambridge Arts Theatre was something of a triumph, and audiences on ETO's three-month tour will be well served.

The most important respect is, of course, musical values, and ETO's secret weapon is its exceptional music director, Andrew Greenwood. He showed complete sympathy for Beethoven's score, understanding how individual phrases and whole numbers should be shaped for maximum dramatic effect. He drew highly expressive playing from his eager band, not all of them virtuosos, although the first oboe's contribution to *O Gott! O weich ein Augenblick* was ravishing. But the spirit and commitment of the playing placed it beyond any serious reproach.

The second most important respect is belief in what you are doing, especially in action that can seem melodramatic, and whatever doubts there were — dozens, actually — about details in Robert Chevara's production, everyone on stage brought burning conviction to every word of David Pountney's good trans-

# Music breaks down the bars

lation. In these circumstances Beethoven's opera strikes to the heart like no other, and for that Chevara and his cast deserve highest praise.

Music speaks more clearly and directly than any stage action, a truism that should be

Leonore while fielding that indefinable heroic dimension so essential to the role. Geraint Dodd's Florestan had similar vocal glow and ringing, secure top notes, his timbre reminiscent of the young Jon Vickers. Not all the others reached this standard, although Paul Hudson's long experience proved valuable as Father Rocco. But the communal fervour of principals and 11-strong chorus left me both shaken and stirred.

RODNEY MILNES

# RADIO

was a key element in the establishing of the United Nations, went through between 1948 and 1950. Hiss was convicted of spying, a charge he denied right up to his death two years ago. In addition to its nominal brief, this programme does much to explain the Reds under the Bed hysteria that had swept through America after the Second World War.

None of which entirely compensates for a worry about the way that Wednesday's programme was put together. I have now listened to it twice, the first time without benefit of any listings information, the second time after consulting the listings. Most ordinary listeners,

# OPERA

**Fidelio**  
Cambridge

# OPERA

engraved on every producer's heart. Prisoners doing drama-school *Marat-Sade* acting during their chorus diminishes what Beethoven has already said far better. Dito Florestan ranting his chains in the introduction to his aria. The vision of a woman applying scissors to her hair in the overture and, even worse, a vision of Leonore herself when Florestan is singing about her are pure kitsch, a commodity hitherto notably absent from *Fidelio*. Images, many incomprehensible, were projected on to or built into Es Devlin's plain set, to inevitably distract effect. If they were ex-

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...but of course in the case of serious naughtiness, thumbscrews would have to be employed!

سكوا من الأصل

# Suicide brought on many changes

Few bands have been as worshipped and vilified as the gritty techno pioneers from New York. Stephen Dalton reports

If you can judge a cult band by the fame of their fans, then Suicide were one of the most important groups in pop history. For their brief set at the Barbican's *Inventing America* festivities last month, New York techno-rock veterans Martin Rev and Alan Vega drew a select invited audience mostly composed of musicians from far more acclaimed and successful bands. The air was heavy with reverence.

The night before, the duo had joined hugely fashionable drone-rockers Spiritualized on stage at the Astoria at the personal invitation of the band's frontman, Jason Pierce. "I'm a massive fan from way back and I just thought that our fans should know who Suicide are too," Pierce explained.

And the celebrity fan club does not end there. To coincide with the CD reissue of their eponymous debut album, originally released in 1977, Suicide play their first London shows in ten years next week. Among the starry names lending their DJ skills will be Pulp's Jarvis Cocker and Depeche Mode's Martin Gore. Both, to some degree, are repaying personal debts to rock's original synthesizer duo.

"The synthesizer before Suicide was always a clean-cut instrument, whereas they brought in a punk element," Gore says. "That was a very important step in the history of electronic music. They were way before bands like the Prodigy or the whole industrial scene."

Mark Webber, Pulp's guitarist, agrees. "In the Eighties, bands like Soft Cell and the Human League were directly descended from Suicide. They're important because they set out on a course in 1970 and they've always followed the same course, even though they didn't get to release a record for years. They realised how important their idea was and they followed it." Suicide's idea was simple but effective. Inspired by fellow cult minimalists the Velvet Underground and the Stooges, but weary of the claustrophobic conservatism of Sixties rock, Rev and Vega imported experimental techniques from other artistic disciplines (Vega was a sculptor, Rev a classically trained jazz musician) into pop. Guitars and drums were replaced by Rev's single pulsing keyboard and Vega's haunted, intense,

Presley-esque vocals. The result was a sort of primal, futuristic blues. Suicide were the first band to make machinery sound sleazy.

The price of being avant-garde pioneers was exclusion from most New York rock venues and starvation for much of the Seventies. Even now, after two decades of notoriety, Suicide's commercial profile remains limited. And this latest flurry of activity, these grizzled 50-year-olds insist, is emphatically not some tacky reunion stunt.

"We were always together, we never broke up, we just did other things," says the Bronx-born Rev. "There's only two of us so we can keep a dynamic like that going for a long time. And we made this album in 1977, so this is almost like we're finally doing the promotional tour we should have done 20 years ago."

Back then, Suicide were better known for their confrontational live shows than their music. A combination of Rev's ground-breaking use of electronic instruments and Vega's pugnacious, chain-

swinging stage persona provoked violent audience reactions on both sides of the Atlantic. Bottles, chairs and even axes were frequently thrown at the black-clad duo.

"We used to have full-scale riots when people saw we were using machines," says Brooklyn native Vega, louder and more garrulous than his musical partner. "This was the early Seventies, and we were probably the first band ever to use a drum machine. And there would be actual riots over that. We'd walk out bleeding."

Despite their roots in New York's art scene, the duo deny that this onstage antagonism was merely a contrived artistic pose. "It wasn't as conscious as that," Rev says. "It was provocative because it was a statement against what was happening around us. Anything really new in art or life is revolutionary," Vega concurs. "We didn't just want to entertain. We were angry, man. We were poor, literally homeless at times. The Vietnam war was going nuts, with Nixon bombing everyone. We were crazy, and being hungry all the time makes you do strange things."

In the late Seventies, this aggression finally found a focus in the punk movement, which embraced Suicide as long-lost godfathers. But even this newfound respect did not deter the band's violent detractors. In 1978, while touring with Elvis Costello and the Clash, they incited riots almost every night. One such semi-legendary fracas was captured in the live recording *23 Minutes Over Brussels*, which is also being re-released as a sister CD to *Suicide*.



"Anything really new in art or life is revolutionary": for Suicide — Martin Rev (left) and Alan Vega — being revolutionary led to being beaten up by angry Seventies punks

Punk may have provided a context for Suicide's attitude and marked the beginning of their elevation to underground icons, but Vega and Rev wilfully avoided cashing in on the post-punk boom. After releasing a second album, *Alan Vega and Martin Rev*, to little fanfare in 1979, they put Suicide on hold to pursue personal projects. Vega, especially, carved a modestly successful solo career.

The odd couple next performed together in the late Eighties, when a new generation of their fans were in full bloom. Artists such as Nick Cave, New Order and the Jesus and Mary Chain were self-confessed Suicide devotees, just like Primal Scream or Spiritualized a decade later. But the duo remain graciously ambivalent about their musical offspring. "A lot of bands say we influenced them, and maybe we did," Rev shrugs. "But I don't listen for similarities. We were just doing what was going to happen anyway. If it hadn't been us, it would have been somebody else."

Such level-headed modesty scarcely suits Suicide's outlaw legend status. Then again, after almost 30 years in the gutter, perhaps they deserve a little sober respectability. But even so, wouldn't they be a trifle disappointed if their London shows pass off without insult or injury?

"Not at all, as long as we like what we do," Rev says. "If it moves us, that's a good gig. We never went out originally to start riots. We'd rather be loved; nobody really wants to be hated."

*Suicide are at the Highbury Garage (0171-344 0044) from March 5-8. Suicide the album is released on March 9 by Blast First*

AN EXCLUSIVE READER OFFER THE TIMES

## FREE TICKETS FOR GOOD WILL HUNTING

### PLUS GET A FREE SPECIAL EDITION SCREENPLAY

Readers of *The Times* have an exclusive chance to see *Good Will Hunting* with two free tickets for a special screening on Wednesday March 4, two days before it goes on general release. This astounding film has been nominated for nine Academy Awards including Best Film, Best Director, Best Actor and Best Original Screenplay. It has already won The Golden Globe Award for Best Original Screenplay for young writers and stars Matt Damon and Ben Affleck.



**HOW TO GET YOUR 2 FREE CINEMA TICKETS**  
Attach four differently numbered Free Film Tickets tokens to the voucher (another will appear in *metro* tomorrow). Present them before the close of business on Sunday March 1 at one of the 72 participating cinemas listed below. You will be entitled to receive a pair of free tickets for the private screening on Wednesday March 4, subject to seat availability and allocated on a first-come first-served basis.

**HOW TO GET YOUR FREE SPECIAL EDITION SCREENPLAY**  
Collect four differently numbered Free Screenplay tokens and post them with the application form (another will be published in *metro* tomorrow), together with three second-class stamps for postage to a UK address. Please allow 28 days for delivery. The closing date is March 14, 1998. The tale of *Will Hunting* was conceived by then Harvard student Matt Damon as a short story to fulfill a creative writing assignment in 1992. When he showed it to his friend Ben Affleck they realised the story had the makings of a great movie.

In addition, *The Times* and Faber and Faber have arranged for you to receive a unique offer: an exclusive special edition paperback of the award-winning screenplay. Lifelong friends Matt Damon and Ben Affleck have written a film that is funny, ironic and profoundly moving. It tells the story of an angry 20-year-old, from a tough, working class neighbourhood and in trouble with the law, who has the ability to solve mathematical problems instantly and summon obscure historical references from a photographic memory. His only hope is a psychologist, played by Robin Williams, who has sympathy for his emotional struggles and understands what it is like to fight your way through life.

- CLYDEBANK** Regional Centre DERBY Metro Centre DUNDEE Maryhill Centre EAST KILBRIDE Olympia Shopping Centre EDINBURGH Kinross Park GATHEAD Metro Centre HATFIELD The Galleria HIGH WYCOMBE Crest Rd HUNDERSFIELD Kirkcaldy McAlpine Stadium HULL St Andrews Quay LONDON LEE VALLEY Edmonton WHITELEYS Bayswater MILTON KEYNES The Point Midsummer Blvd POOLE Towner Park PORT SOLENT Portway, Cosham PRESTON Riversway, Ashton On Ribbles SHEFFIELD Crystal Peaks Shopping Centre SOLIHULL Highlands Rd SUTTON St Nicholas Centre SWANSEA Quay Parade TAMWORTH Bolesbridge St TELFORD Forgegate WARRINGTON Westbrook Centre WEST THURROCK Lakeside Retail Park
- ODEON** ODEON CINEMAS 6PM FOR 6.30PM BIRMINGHAM New St GLASGOW Quay, Paisley Rd GOLDFORD Bedford Rd HEBEL HEMPSTEAD Jarnan Park HULL Kingston Park KETTERING Pegasus Court LEICESTER Freemans Park LONDON Odeon Liberty 2 SHEFFIELD Arundel Gate SOUTHAMPTON Leisure World SOUTHERN The Broadway STONE Etruria Rd WRECHAM Hill Coach Retail Park

MIRAMAX CHANGING TIMES

Cornershop were rubbish, and now they're so good they're at No 1. How?

## Laughing heroes of the counter-culture

What would you do if you were at No 1? Having thought about it for a long time, I know that I'd be naked save for a pair of Manolo Blahnik kitten-heels and a large, dark red velvet picture-hat; and that I would be riding a leopard around the front room, smoking an enormous fag and having sherry trifle fed into my widest vein.

Tjinder Singh, Cornershop's writer, producer, scratcher, guitarist and vocalist — and currently Emperor and Overlord of the No 1 slot on the singles chart — is fully dressed, in sensible shoes, squeezing a teabag on the side of a mug with a fork.

"I suppose I should be hanging out of the window, or something," he shrugs, flicking the teabag into the bin and settling down on to the sofa. "But ..." he shrugs again, before a flirty-happy beam splits his face. "It's nice enough without that. Maybe I'll walk around naked later."

We're in the front room of his flat in Archway, North London, a place that has resisted *Changing Rooms*' clarion call to brush and roller. Instead, the tired walls and battered floors are covered with music. Two turntables and a pair of thrillingly bassy speakers obscure the wall opposite the sofa. The long and surreal shape of a star case looms in a corner; simultaneously lithe and swollen, it looks like an elegant woman with pregnant feet.



A punchbag hangs from the ceiling, casting a shadow over Vinyl Pile 1. Vinyl Pile 2, by the door, merges into Vinyl Pile 3, which is the overflow from the Actual Vinyl Shelving System. Singh is ricocheting between all these piles and the turntables; flinging records off halfway through; fiddling with half a dozen faders; and urging his speaker-comes to blow during one particularly dubby 12in, because "you get a well phat sound when they pop". Cornershop's journey to

album came out, *Melody Maker* and *NME* were ignoring them — not surprisingly, given lyrics such as "You remind me of Tessa Sanderson/It must be the way you throw the javelin." Having been told, rather forcefully, to stop wasting everyone's time and go away, Cornershop started the long and depressing slog of Getting Great and then Getting Re-evaluated. The first of these seems to have been almost supernaturally easy. Their second album, 1995's *Woman's Got to Have It*, kicked off with the rapturous, glazed-eye mantra of *Jullander Shere*, which sounds like the theme tune to *Humanity — The Movie*. The inexplicable gorgeousness continued with the subsequent album, *When I Was Born For The 7th Time*, which confirmed that Cornershop had stopped shouting and found the Groove. Tours with Beck and Oasis alerted everyone to the crazy new party going on in Cornershop's head; and by the time *Brimful of Asha* was rereleased, Cornershop had saturated almost every corner of the waking world, from the Murphy's beer advert to Mark and Lard's theme-tune for their show on Radio 1.

One of the keys to Cornershop music is that it sounds as if it's made by Really Lovely People, the kind of people you walk away from bent double, squealing: "He's so nice!" The hymnagogic harmonium shuffle of *Sleep on the Left Side* is the aural equivalent of watching a baby giggle itself to sleep; the kind of cockle-braining joy that impels you to spend an afternoon opening doors for old ladies and washing other people's dogs.

"The people who get into us do seem to be very ... fond of us," says Cornershop's leader Tjinder Singh (right)

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# An immaculate finger on the dance pulse

**NEW ALBUMS:** Madonna's return to the front line of pop sees her as materially up-to-the-minute as ever, says David Sinclair

**MADONNA**  
*Ray of Light*  
(Maverick/Interscope Bros 4362-4847 £13.99)  
FROM being the original Spice Girl in the 1980s, when critics derided her brazen image and routinely dismissed her music as disposable girlie-pop, Madonna has matured into a respected mainstream artist and businesswoman. She has coped with motherhood, bad hair days and an incursion into the world of the Hollywood musical with *Evita*, while keeping her ear sufficiently close to the ground to be able to number Alanis Morissette and the Prodigy among the signatories to her own, Maverick record label in America.

But now, at 39, she clearly craves some 1990s-style credibility of her own, to which end she has recruited the British keyboard player, guitarist and producer William Orbit as a collaborator who can provide her with access to the sounds and structures of modern dance music. She has also hooked up with her old songwriting buddy Pat Leonard, co-author of some of her biggest hits, to provide a reassuring link with the triumphs of the past.

*Ray of Light*, the resulting album, is being talked up as the best Madonna has produced in many years, and perhaps it is. But on first acquaintance it is not an easy or especially inviting collection of songs. The single *Frozen*, which sounds something like an old Bon Jovi tune that never quite got airborne, signals a sombre, rather morose tone. "You're so consumed with how much you get/You waste your time with hate and regret."

*Mer Girl*, one of several ponderously intense autobiographical numbers, deploys images of "tomstones", "burning flesh" and "rotting bones" as Madonna runs through the rain in search of, yes,

herself. "I ran and I ran/I'm still running today". The combination of input from Leonard and Orbit results in several tracks, such as *Sky Fits Heaven*, in which old-school melodies vie with throbbing techno grooves, making the experience rather like listening to the remix album before you have heard the "real" one. But then Madonna's music has always had its roots in the dance floor, and the reinvention of herself as a techno diva produces sensational results on numbers such as *Skin* and especially *Ray of Light* itself, which will surely prove to be one of the landmark dance tracks of the year.

Best of all are the songs which blend old and new Madonna so naturally that you cannot detect the join, in particular *Swim*, with its undulating melody and discreet hip hop influences, and *Nothing Really Matters*, with its wonderfully "up" chorus harnessed to an irresistible, swingbeat rhythm reminiscent of her No 1 hit from 1990, *Vogue*.

Mercurial as ever, Madonna still has the power to challenge and inspire. And even if there has always been a slightly calculated air to the moves that she makes, you could certainly never accuse her of standing still.

**ROBBIE ROBERTSON**  
*Contact from the Underworld of Redboy*  
(Capitol 854 243 £14.49)  
LIKE Madonna, Robbie Robertson has also teamed up with a leading light of the British dance scene, namely producer Hovvie B, on *Contact from the Underworld of Redboy*, an album of high narrative drama and deep cultural undercurrents.

Returning to the ancestral theme of his 1994 soundtrack, *Music for the Native Americans*, the former leader of the Band has created a

sound that is steeped in the music and folklore of the American Indians, yet driven by modern shuffling beats, percussion loops and occasional bursts of shrieking, distorted guitar.

A direct descendant of the Mohawk tribe, Robertson knows of what he speaks, and there is an authority about numbers such as *Stomp Dance (Uniq)* in which Indian chants and hip hop beats coalesce around his gravelly voice, that is a world away from the run-of-the-mill ethnic/dance albums to which we have become all too accustomed in recent years.

Unlike those albums there is also an element of anger running through Robertson's album like a thread of steel. It flashes out most obviously in *Sacrifice*, a track featuring the voice of Indian rights activist Leonard Peltier talking about the 22 years he has served in prison so far, while a mesmerizing Neville Brothers-type groove gradually builds around him like thunderclouds gathering in the sky at dusk.

**THE MAVERICKS**  
*Trampoline*  
(MCA Nashville UMD 80456 £13.99)  
CALLING to mind artists from Chris Isaak to Roy Orbison more readily than they do any of the country acts with whom they are nominally bracketed, the Mavericks from Miami are back with *Trampoline*, another album of romantic tunes, tweaked to time-warped perfection.

Augmented by a fizzing horn section and a small orchestra, all recorded virtually live, along with the group's own twanging guitars, the rich, emotion-soaked voice of Raul Malo negotiates another raft of songs with lyrics in which "remember" invariably rhymes with "September".

Although sometimes a little too cute for comfort — as when they go for the over-obvious descending sequence of *I Don't Even Know Your Name* — they have a wonderfully confident, pre-rock'n'roll charm, not to mention the advantage of being runners in a field of one.

Compact discs reviewed in *The Times* can be ordered from the Times Music Shop on 0345 023498



Even if there has always been a slightly calculated air to the moves that she makes, you could never accuse Madonna of standing still

**MARC JOHNSON**  
*The Sound of Summer Running*  
(Verve 539 299-2)  
BASSIST Marc Johnson's highly regarded late-1980s work with his band Bass Desires, featuring a twin-guitar front line of John Scofield and Bill Frisell, is the obvious musical precedent for this project, which pairs Frisell with fellow guitarist Pat Metheny. But the material in this later set is rather rootier.

Named after a Ray Bradbury short story, the recording has a country feel to it, Frisell in particular indulging in less of the jazz-orientated improvisation heard in,

## Back to basics

**JAZZ ALBUMS**

say, his work with the Paul Motian Trio. Instead, he and Metheny pick their way *usefully* through an intelligently varied set of Johnson originals, spiced with the odd Frisell theme plus a slow-burning closer from Metheny. Whether they are playing gentle boogies, crisp and perky jaunts (one, *Dingy-Dong Day*, resembles a Shadows number), or slowly flickering, jazzier pieces, the band — completed by

bluesy, whip-smart yet pleasantly informal and immediately accessible — was itself not issued until its inclusion in the complete *Brooks Mosaic* set.

It appears now as part of the label's "Connoisseur Series", and Brooks's dry, earnest sound — not unlike that of his more celebrated label-mate Hank Mobley — and Blue Mitchell's bright fluency, not to mention the subtly assertive rhythm section pianist Kenny Drew, bassist Paul Chambers, drummer Ari Taylor, are arresting enough to render Brooks's relative obscurity something of a mystery.

CHRIS PARKER

### TOP TEN ALBUMS

- (2) *Titanic Soundtrack* James Horner (Sony Classical)
- (1) *Urban Hymns* Verve (Hut)
- (3) *Let's Talk About Love* Celine Dion (Epic)
- (4) *All Saints* All Saints (London)
- (5) *Life Thru a Lens* Robbie Williams (Chrysalis)
- (10) *Aquarium* Aqua (Universal)
- (6) *Maverick's Strike* Finley Quaye (Epic)
- (8) *Postcards From Heaven* Lightning Bolt (Wild Card)
- (9) *Truly* Lionel Richie (Motown/Polygram TV)
- (7) *White on Blonde* Texas (Mercury)

© Figures in brackets denotes last week's position

Next week the BBC launches a new jazz series. In April Channel 4 does the same. Clive Davis gets set to applaud

# Hi, and welcome to jazz club ... Niice!

A jazz fan glancing at the spring television schedules could be forgiven for thinking that someone was playing a practical joke. Jazz and TV, after all, are not supposed to mix, but both the BBC and Channel 4 have new series starting in the coming weeks.

The BBC gets off the mark first next Wednesday with *Jazz 606*, a six-part collection of live recordings whose title harks back to the popular Sixties series *Jazz 625*. Presented by Lenn Sissay, a poet-playwright with the requisite Cool Britannia street credentials, the programme is being taped at the 606 Club, a venue near Chelsea Harbour which has developed a strong reputation among musicians looking for a sympathetic setting for a jam session.

Channel 4's contribution to this unexpected feast — beginning on April 5 — is the somewhat prosaically titled *Jazz Heroes*, six profiles of major figures in postwar jazz, ranging from Dizzy Gillespie to Gerry Mulligan and Thelonious Monk.

If the general tone of the series threatens to be somewhat starchy-eyed, the programmes at least have the merit of allowing contemporary musicians to do much of the talking. A book accompanying *Jazz Heroes* is due to be published by Collins & Brown at the end of March.



The veteran pianist Stan Tracey, one of the artists featured in the first instalment of the BBC's very cool *Jazz 606*

house that may not be such a bad idea.) Although King promises that there will be no zany camera angles, he is seeking to document what he calls "the brackish tang" of a typical jazz club. He had originally thought of setting up a studio in a warehouse until he stumbled across the 606. Apart from Sissay's occasional bursts of poetry, a regular slot will be given over to Keith Walters's character the Bohemian, the archetypal hipster who claims to have had a hand in many of the events that make up jazz folklore.

He is supposedly the guilty party, for instance, who sat on Gillespie's trumpet at a party and created its famous 45-degree shape. And it was he who took John Coltrane to see *The Sound of Music*, thus prompting Coltrane's famous (or infamous, according to your point of view) version of *My Favourite Things*.

The element of waggishness so often gets squeezed out when jazz is presented on the screen or on the radio. We are so busy checking every last detail of our catalogue numbers and discographies that we forget that the musicians themselves — accustomed to scraping a living — tend to be fairly irreverent souls.

There was an example of that humour during a run-through on Sunday when Sissay, seated near the bandstand, introduced the singer Ian Shaw with a breathless string of hyperbole worthy of the master of ceremonies on *The Good Old Days*: "He's got huge vocal technique, bags and bags of soul..." At this point Shaw could just resist adding, sotto voce: "Lenn, could you add 'No gigs'?"

traditional New Orleans music as well as for avant-garde improvisers such as Evan Parker.

Jazz, however, has become an impossibly broad church. And before we begin carping, we should at least give thanks that this series has managed to slip past programme controllers who so often seem terrified of broadcasting any popular music of the non-teenybopper variety. Remember how, just a few weeks ago, George Martin's series *The Rhythm of Life* was shunted into a graveyard slot?

There are, too, encouraging signs from across the Atlantic, where last month the ABC network screened the second of its annual jazz galas, featuring the likes of Herbie Hancock, Nancy Wilson and John Scofield. Ironically enough this "celebration of America's music" was sponsored by Nissan — the Japanese have always taken their jazz more seriously than just about anyone else. Still, it was the first jazz programme to receive a prime-time airing in in the past 30 years.

### BLUES ALBUMS

## Of the people, by the people

People thought John Lomax was crazy when, in the 1930s, he loaded his car with bulky recording equipment and set out on the road with his son Alan to capture the music of the Southern states of America — the music of the cotton fields, the workcamps, the churches and even the state prisons.

The aim was to make recordings for the Library of Congress, but there was an extra and unforeseen benefit. "By making it possible to record and play back music in remote areas, it gave a voice to the voiceless," Alan Lomax recalls in his book, *The Land Where Blues Began*. "The performers were heartened when they heard their own music and often spoke into the microphone as if the machine were a telephone. One black sharecropper began: 'Now listen here, Mr President, I want you to know they're not treating us right down here...'"

The father and son tapped into a vast wealth of blues, folk and gospel music that had been ignored by the major record companies. Along the way they discovered artists like Leadbelly, Woody Guthrie and the young Muddy Waters and created an archive of music that was to influence everyone from Bob Dylan to Beck.

Alan Lomax, now 82 and as busy as ever researching world music, carried on his father's work in the 1950s and 1960s, recording children's songs in the West Indies, sea shanties in Georgia and discovering in Mississippi one of the last of the great country bluesmen, Fred McDowell.

The field recordings made by the Lomaxes have been issued piecemeal over the past 40 years. But now a five-year project has begun to release more than 100 CDs from the

Lomax archive on the American record label Rounder. The first 13 volumes in this series, subtitled *Southern Journey*, have now been released. The road with his son Alan to capture the music of the Southern states of America — the music of the cotton fields, the workcamps, the churches and from the Ozarks to the Mississippi Delta, recording artists such as gospel singer Beanie Jones. Other CDs, such as the chilling *Murderous Home*

and *Don'tcha Hear Poor Mother Calling?*, focus on the prison and chain gang recordings made at the infamous Parchman Farm in the 1940s. But the most acclaim has been reserved for a CD devoted to the tracks Alan Lomax cut with the bottleneck guitar master McDowell. *The First Recordings* features a range of stunning performances. "We recorded outdoors after dark," says Lomax. "No wind was blowing, so we could take advantage of the living quiet of open air and the natural resonance of the earth and the trees. The sound we captured made us all deliriously happy."

JOHN CLARKE



### Mistress sold tale of defence chief's love for £175,000

THE former Lady Mack, who sold details of her affair with the Chief of Defence Staff, has been ordered to pay the cost of the trial. The judge said she had been "grossly negligent" in not disclosing the affair to the public.

### CHIEF OF DEFENCE IN SEX AND SECURITY SCANDAL

Britain's war beds Tory



### Treasury minister issues Aitken sue

Aitken's exit: How persistent allegations about arms trade contacts added up to a big political embarrassment.

### MELLOR QUILTS AT LAST TOE JOB TO



Just one more scandal will finish me off

# Can the press survive Straw's law?

In a document published today, journalists express their concern about privacy legislation. Tessa Mayes reports

Journalists breathed a sigh of relief when the Government said recently it wanted to safeguard the press, and Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, announced amendments to the Human Rights Bill to protect media freedom. Yet how safe, in fact, is the press? Many journalists are worried about the influence of new regulations to protect privacy proposed since the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. Their concerns are revealed in a briefing document published today titled *Disclosure: media freedom and the privacy debate* after Diana produced by the London International Research Exchange media group. It contains interviews with a cross-section of journalists, photographers and media lawyers. They have good reason to be fearful. While Mr Straw seems to offer them an olive branch (for example, judges are to be advised to pay more regard to an article on a right to freedom than to one on privacy), the introduction of new privacy laws will be made by judicial review. And the judges may

Whether journalists are curbed through privacy legislation or codes of conduct, the result will be to hinder investigations of people they think worthy of scrutiny. It makes it more difficult for them to decide for themselves whether the activities of a public figure or member of the public who is the subject of a national news story are important enough to be publicly discussed. Privacy presents a new form of evidence. Rather than through a costly libel battle, subjects of stories may in future invoke "privacy intrusion". Some interviewees in the *Disclosure* report say that there is already a "chilling effect" within the media. Media lawyers are more likely to cut out anything that is thought too personal. Indeed, privacy is fast becoming a catch-all term defined as anything which somebody decides should be kept hidden. The discussion on privacy is now about the whole nature of the media and its role in society. The idea of a "free press" is being replaced with a new catchphrase — the "responsible press". Journalism is being redefined. Once, investigative journalists and news photographers were respected for their courage and persistence in pursuing a story. Now they are more likely to be attacked for harassing people, adopting intrusive methods, labelled "paparazzi scum", or seen as morally deficient. The old adage "publish and be damned" is now viewed as an irresponsible act. The new emphasis is on the journalist as a responsible agent rather than an independent investigator of the truth of falsity of a situation. Although we may not wish to know about the sex lives of people we have never heard of, or disagree with a journalist's views, do we really want to see a situation where some people's idea of a tasteful and decent story is applied to everybody else's work?

The trouble with legislation on what people can think, talk or read about is that it assumes that somebody else should decide on behalf of ordinary people. A negative law that stops journalists from intruding into certain arenas is as problematic to develop as a positive law stipulating the kind of stories which should be printed under the definition of "public interest". Any codification of the press implies that editors and journalists should agree to keep the secrets of the rich, powerful and famous from the rest of the public and report only on what the courts decide is appropriate. Ordinary people are clearly at a disadvantage compared with celebrities and public figures when it comes to getting their views heard. Perhaps if there was more space in the media for people to answer their critics, journalists would be held to account by public debate rather than by judges or politicians. A bigger danger for readers and viewers is a sanitised version of events, where caution prevails over a spirit of disclosure.

### New rules on privacy can only restrict freedom

Offenders Act (relating to past convictions). The new Protection from Harassment Act 1997, for example, makes harassment a criminal offence. There is nothing within it to prevent the private prosecution of journalists who repeatedly ask for a reply to allegations, and who could be said to be harassing somebody who does not wish to be interviewed.

### OUR SOCIETY IS ALREADY SECRET ENOUGH, SAY THE JOURNALISTS



**Aan Leslie**  
Special correspondent, Daily Mail

"People may point to Article 10 on freedom of speech within the European Convention on Human Rights as a form of press defence. Yet in Britain, we have nearly 50 statutes limiting freedom of speech. We live in a secretive society. A lot of what we do is nudge, wink and wink. A more open society would mean we wouldn't have to invade people's privacy so much. The idea that we need to ensure that a privacy law contains a public interest defence to protect the press, and that's why we should negotiate with the Government about a privacy law, is an argument in support of a Bill of Rights. It's a good argument. I don't happen to agree with it because if you try to do deals with any British government, there will be yet another law against the media. We won't have increased our freedom."

to their public persona, position or reputation. One's bank statement is a private matter, but in some circumstances it isn't."

**Dan Lloyd**  
Barrister

"At the heart of this debate there is a sick irony. As the rights of tabloids to photograph their targets become restricted, everybody else's right to respect for privacy has been severely curtailed. The elite may now be campaigning vociferously for new laws to protect their lives from interference by the press. At the same time they have presided over the creation of a surveillance society where you can be filmed walking in most major cities in modern Britain."

**Miguel Arana**  
Paparazzi photographer

"I think photographers must work on common sense rather than rules or laws. If you are only allowed to take pictures of people who are smiling at you through the lens, then all we are doing is PR photography. If the celebrity wants us to be there, then we are working for them. When they don't want us there, we are not supposed to do it."

**Roger Alton**  
Features editor, The Guardian, speaking in a personal capacity

"The restrictions on the press are tremendously tight. To welcome or encourage any more legislation on privacy is terrible. Journalism is intrinsically intrusive. To do your job properly, you have to intrude. I can't get worked up about famous people's lives. But if you didn't have that stuff you would have a boring press."

**Elizabeth Clough**  
Executive producer, Rough Justice, BBC TV

"I have sympathy for some individuals who feel their domestic lives have been invaded. However, I have little sympathy for those who deserve investigation and invoke notions of privacy to protect themselves from journalists investigating criminals."

**Piers Morgan**  
Editor, The Mirror

"If the judges are going to set the privacy law for the European Commission on Human Rights, can you imagine the kinds of things we're going to have? Our judges have never heard of the Spice Girls. Why should judges who don't read newspapers like mine dictate what I think is right for my readers? It is argued that we need politicians to frame a law. But which politician would you trust to safeguard press freedom? Jonathan Aitken? Neil Hamilton? I certainly wouldn't entrust it to them."

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The forum, on March 5 at 8pm at the Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1, marks the publication of Bragg's book, *On Giants' Shoulders - Great Scientists and their discoveries from Archimedes to DNA* (Hodder & Stoughton, £12.99). The admission price of £10 (cones £7.50) includes £2 off the book.

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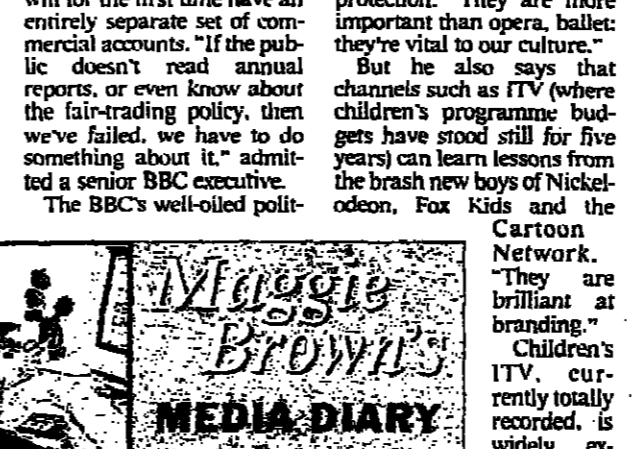
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## An end to scratching in private

THE BBC is running into heavy seas over its new lottery show, based on scratchcard winners, starting on March 28. But Dianne Thompson, the Camelot director in charge of commercial operations, says that it is recent Brits who are the real problem. Camelot has found that only a tiny 0.1 per cent of the big winners of instant cash prizes ever go public. This compares with 15 per cent of lottery draw millionaires. Apparently we scratch our Instants in private, but rarely at the place purchased or in front of other people — unlike other nationalities: in America the winner tends to let the whole bar know. Our ability to keep mum about a windfall £50,000 has created a credibility gap for Instants — nobody is ever seen to win. The new game, which will run for an initial 10 weeks, has certainly caused heart-searching within the BBC. Assailed from all sides for being too commercial, the new £2 scratchcard game and television show are being given different names — *TV Dreams* and *The Big Ticker* — to get around the problem that the BBC can't promote it directly. Camelot's advertising campaign will coyly link the cards with "a TV show" and roadshows for shoppers in Tesco to explain how you can get onto the BBC. If the programme works, it may become a regular Saturday evening feature. The serious point is that the BBC's commercial activities — from magazine publishing to new joint-venture commercial television channels — are being regulated by the independent regulator. The BBC privately admits that it has failed to explain its fair-trading policy: each year it smugly says its auditors vetted by the auditors KPMG, who testify that its licence-fee money has been used in cross-subsidising its business activities. This year's annual report — in Parliament in July — will for the first time have an entirely separate set of commercial accounts. "If the public doesn't read annual reports, or even know about the fair-trading policy, then we've failed, we have to do something about it," admitted a senior BBC executive. The BBC's well-oiled polit-



protection. "They are more important than opera, ballet, they're vital to our culture." But he also says that channels such as ITV (where children's programme budgets have stood still for five years) can learn lessons from the rash new boys of Nickelodeon, Fox Kids and the Cartoon Network. "They are brilliant at branding." Children's ITV, currently totally rebranded, is widely expected to pep up its appeal with special presenters, as is Channel 4, once its new children's TV boss, Andi Peters, the former BBC children's presenter, gets his feet under the desk. ■ DEBATE is still raging over the moving of *News at Ten*. Carlton says that staying put "is not an option" but a *News at Seven* is ruled out because of the bunching effect with Channel 4 and 5. The big money is on 5.30pm, since this will allow ITV to

continue with its commercial mainstay: 9pm high-rating popular drama and big factual series. However, the network centre is currently ordering more family-centred dramas for the 8pm-9pm slot. ■ ITN's real nightmare is that the BBC will popularise its *Nine O'Clock News*. Meanwhile, the row over *Yesterday in Parliament's* demotion to long wave (on which a third of the audience listen) is a foretaste of the row ITV can expect. ■ The BBC is on the hunt for a new daily pre-school programme to screen alongside *Teletubbies* from 1999. It is sensitive to the criticism that by putting all its pre-school budget into the freaky hit, it has ignored the educational needs of four to five-year olds, who have to make do with repeats of *Playtime*. Roy Thompson, the head of BBC children's television, is seeking "another engaging, brilliant format". It has given 12 producers as well as in-house departments until this weekend to come up with ideas. *Teletubbies* who talk?

### TOM BOWER

Last week's *Media Times* article by *Time* magazine journalist Tom Sanction responded to British press criticism of his book *Death of a Princess*. Sanction flew to Tom Bower in Paris in early September and stayed at the Ritz Hotel. As part of his research to obtain the first interview with Dodi Fayed's valet, he in fact stayed at one of Mohamed Al Fayed's apartments. The article also stated that Mr Bower subsequently started an autobiography of Mr Al Fayed in response to the book plans of Sanction and his co-author Scott MacLeod. In fact, Mr Bower had begun researching his "unauthorised" biography before the Princess died. We regret these errors. An article about Princess Diana's romance with Dodi Fayed, written by Mr Bower five months earlier, appeared in the *Daily Mail* on February 9. We accept that this was not, as our article might have seemed to imply, either commissioned or prepared for publication by his wife, Veronica Wadley, Associate Editor of the *Daily Mail*. We apologise to Ms Wadley and Mr Bower for any embarrassment they have been caused.

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# Don't swat all those flies on the wall

This has not been a good month for the image of television's latest addition, the fly-on-the-wall documentary. *Chris Paul*, Watson, the man who brought us classics such as *The Family* and *Sylvia Waters* (described some of the latest offerings as being dismal TV "at its cheapest and laziest", making fools of viewers).

Then came the embarrassing revelation that one of the principal characters in *Dominic Savage's* Channel 4 *Rogue Males* is a wannabe actor who recently starred in another documentary, *The Complainers*. It also emerged that some of the scenes were set up — although Channel 4 insisted they were "reconstructed truth", rather than total fabrication.

Not the best climate, one might imagine, for Stephen Lambert, the BBC's esteemed editor of *Modern Times*, to launch both his new spring series and *Premier Passions*, a five-part series on Sunderland Football Club's turbulent season in the Premier League.

Lambert, being at the Rolls-Royce end of the documentary scale, might be expected to be irritated by easy-watching programmes such as *Pleasure Beach* and *Hotel* giving the genre a bad name. Not a bit of it. He welcomes their high ratings, and believes their lighthearted feel will make the public more likely to take part in documentaries in general. "These factual soaps are not very cutting-edge. They have a feelgood factor which makes people warm to them," he says. "I would be much more worried if they were squeezing out serious documentaries. But their growth has been at the expense of light entertainment and drama."

Lambert appears to be right about that. Figures this week showed BBC's top-rated show to be *Superstore* (4.95 million), while BBC1 had four docu-soaps in its top 20 — *Pleasure Beach*, *Vets In Practice* and *The Cruise*, which had two entries. He says: "If these programmes are creating any problem, it is that they may be making it more difficult to launch a

## Are docu-soaps cheap and lazy TV? The BBC's Stephen Lambert defends a much criticised genre to Carol Midgley

new series and get the critics excited by it. Some newspapers have certainly got excited about *Premier Passions*, which began on Tuesday, albeit mainly because the Sunderland manager, Peter Reid, manages to say "I'm 40 times in one episode." *Premier Passions* is, however, almost certainly destined for critical acclaim. It charts the very real passion of fans and the drama of the club as it is floated on the Stock Exchange and then relegated.

*Modern Times* is also serving up some programmes which are likely to make the headlines. There is *Clampers*, recording the tempestuous working life of traffic wardens; *Friends*, about a group of thirty-somethings still single and living it up; and *Agony Aunts*, which focuses not only on the newspaper advice columnist but also the people who have written in for help.

Lambert, 36, says: "With *Clampers*, for instance, we have gone for situations where there is conflict; there are lots of people screaming at traffic wardens." He concedes that some recent documentaries had been poor, however. "Particularly dismal, he says, was *Dover* (an ITV production, coincidentally) but he liked *Hotel* (a BBC property, surprise, surprise).

The problem, says Lambert, has been characterisation. "The characters haven't tended to have much of an edge to them in the weaker shows. They have tended to be likeable. But *Hotel* [with the formidable manager Eileen Downey] had a great character."

Peter Salmon, Controller of BBC1, apparently agrees. He reportedly said this week that he wants fresher ideas for "factuals"

which mix programme styles and do not rely simply on pointing the camera at something.

Lambert believes that camera pointing is exactly what he is not encouraging. "The genre is evolving in lots of different ways and directions," he says. "We are exploiting the potential of different ways of making films with DV cameras." Lightweight DV cameras allow a documentary maker to shoot a film over a period of one or two months, rather than the 12 to 16 days more usual with a film crew. This is because DV filming is cheaper and allows the team to spend more time with the subject, resulting in a more intimate film.

One example of this will be a *Modern Times* "special" provisionally titled *Twoekers* — a mixture of drama and documentary which tells the real-life story of a group of child burglars. "I would call it drama, but it is absolutely rooted in reality," Lambert says. "We get real people to play themselves in a plot. It is heightened reality."

A recent good example of the use of the DV camera, he says, was *Breaking Point*, in which couples attending Relate sessions were filmed in therapy and in their homes.

Lambert is also hoping to widen the boundaries of the documentary format with a new pilot for a "challenge show" — a hybrid of a game show and a documentary. "We are trying to come up with a format for a game show documentary where people are given a task to complete. Unlike a game show, where the action is confined to the studio, we follow the contestants over a week in documentary style."

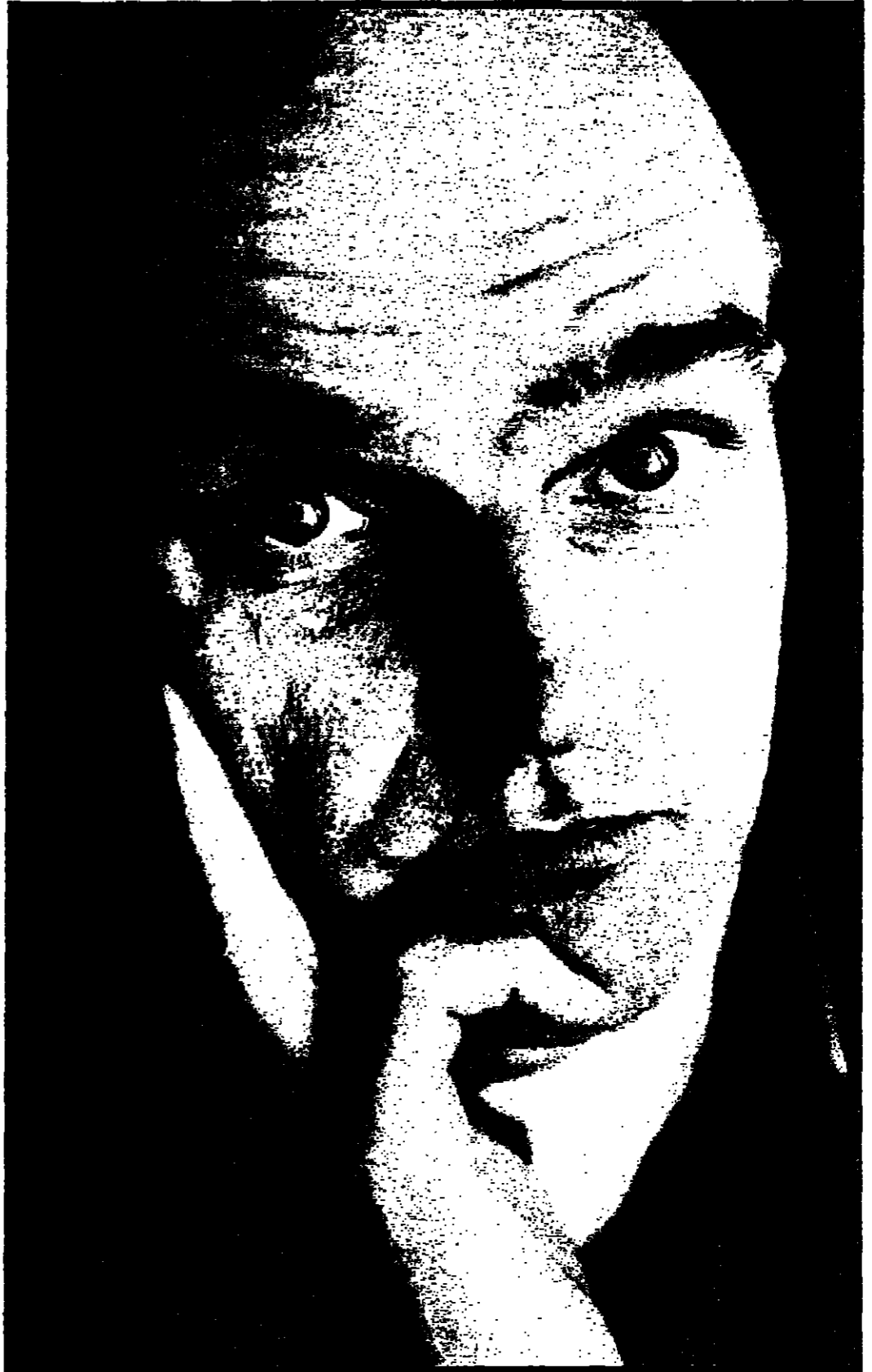
When Lambert was studying for a PhD at Nuffield College, Oxford, in 1983, he was asked to write a definitive book on the new Channel 4 — which he completed with relish. "I wouldn't do it now," he says hurriedly. "I would be far too intimidated." The book earned him a job as a researcher for documentary features at the BBC, where he has been ever since. He became a producer on *40 Minutes*, then on *Inside Story* and was the launch editor of *Modern Times* in 1996. BBC insiders say he is showing the hallmarks of becoming a Controller some day.

He is untroubled by the accusations of people such as Paul Watson, for whose views, he says, he has little time. Watson himself, he points out, produced an "awful" documentary — *The Dinner Party* — which featured people sitting round a table spouting right-wing views.

"It was a false event. Nobody knew each other — it was all at the instigation of the documentary maker. It pretended to have the dynamics of a real dinner party, but then didn't have the confidence to let it run. It kept cutting away to separate pre-recorded interviews. It all felt fabricated."

Lambert believes it is possible to make a film on almost any subject, provided the film maker is talented and goes about the job in an individual way. He admits to being less than excited about hard-hitting, campaigning documentaries. "I'm much more interested in humour and in ambiguity," he says.

Does he worry that documentaries have now become the butt of comedians' humour? (*Friday Night Armistice* recently satirised a planning meeting at which TV producers had the brilliant idea of making a fly-on-the-wall docu-drama about a fly on the wall.) "Humour often comes out of the most serious things and if people are making jokes about documentaries, then that must say something about how successful they are and how they are part of our lives."



Stephen Lambert: "Factual soaps have a feelgood factor which makes people warm to them"

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Week

# More eloquent than a thousand words

Sorrow, anguish, anger, courage — so many emotions were captured in the photograph on the right by *Mirror* man Mike Moore after the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, that it merits the great journalistic cliché: it spoke more eloquently than a thousand words about memories of a mother, wife and sister and a father's anxiety for his bereaved sons.

As the Princess's coffin was being loaded on to the hearse outside Westminster Abbey, the Prince of Wales glanced at his sons twice. Moore failed to capture the first but kept his camera focused on the Prince. When he briefly glanced across at them again, Moore was rewarded with a single frame that helped to win him the Royal Photographer of the Year award at the *British Picture Editors Awards* on Wednesday night.

Moore admits there was an element of luck in his success. He was in exactly the right position to get his telling shot. Yet luck has to be made and Moore was gambling on his photographer's instinct. "It's an eye they are born with," says Ron Morgans, the *Mirror* picture editor. "I don't believe you can teach it. It's an ability that transcends any skills of the journeymen of the trade."

Morgans believes that such photographers are a dying breed. That was difficult to believe at London's Guildhall on Wednesday, when a jovial Tony Blair, accompanied by his wife, presented the awards, sponsored by Kodak, Fuji, Diageo and the City of London.

There still hangs about newspaper photographers a strong and welcome whiff of the old, raffish Fleet Street and it was a very jolly night. Only photographers would think of photographing the Prime Minister photographing the winners and ordering him around to get the best shots — but only politicians who know the value of images would obey their imperious demands.

Two pictures have perhaps haunted the Blairs more than all the thousands of others. One was of Humphrey the Cat, who had to be photographed to show the world he had not been sentenced to death. Mr Blair credited (to Alan Clark) this incident as the only effective bit of opposition since last May. Wherever he went in the world, he said, he was still asked about Humphrey.

The other — a bleary-eyed Cherie Blair opening the front door of her Islington home in her nightdress on the Saturday morning after the election — won the News Photographer award for the Sygma agency's Matthew Polak. Except that most of us knew how Mrs Blair must have felt that morning, and she was shown as an ordinary human being, the

picture could have been deemed intrusive. To show there were no hard feelings, Polak was given a warm hug by Mrs Blair.

The warmest applause of the evening greeted the lifetime achievement award for the veteran Associated Press photo editor Horst Faas. Faas started with the Keystone agency in 1951 and went on to cover Vietnam for 12 years before moving to AP in London in 1976. One of his riveting and eloquent pictures was of Vietnamese women seeking refuge from fire alongside American troops in Kien Hoa, north of the Mekong Delta.

The world nowadays is short of wars. So sport, with its movement, colour and competition, offers photographers some of the best opportunities to show their skills. The Sports Photographer of the Year was Toby Melville, of the *Bristol Evening Post*, for a picture which captured better than any words the awesome strength and power of Jonah Lomu, the New Zealand rugby player.

Newspaper photographers, as Moore acknowledged, have had a bad year after the death of Diana and the accompanying controversy about the role of paparazzi. Nor is journalism so attractive a career now that there are so many rival jobs on offer in film and television. Newspapers certainly employ fewer staff snappers and the tabloids often use their pictures with less flair than in the past.

Yet the triumph of the evening went to Stuart Conway, a 23-year-old freelance from Glasgow who was Young Photographer, Regional Photographer and Photographer of the Year for his work for *The Herald* and *Daily Record* in Scotland. Conway did a BA in photography, film and television at Napier University and opted for journalism for the variety it offered in news, sport and features. All the older photographers he meets still seem to enjoy their careers, he observes.

Yet there is no doubt that photographs command less space in most newspapers than they did in the golden days of the 1950s and 1960s, when television news was in its infancy, and the *Daily Express* ran a daily Photonews page and even *The Times* used half-page photographs on the back page. The irony is that delivery is speedier — and from anywhere in the world — and the pictures are in colour.

What's wrong today, says Horst Faas, is that the picture journalists with "knowledge" have been ousted by designers who worry more about flashy layout than content and whether pictures are meaningful. The picture is no longer king. Not quite fair but there is an element of truth in that accusation.



The royals mourn Diana, Princess of Wales: picture by Mike Moore, of *The Mirror*



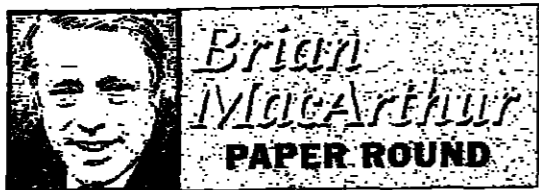
Power play: by Toby Melville, *Bristol Evening Post*



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# Weekend on Wall St

After 109 years, America's staid business bible, The Wall Street Journal, is introducing a weekend lifestyle section. Oliver August reports on a publishing revolution

In terms of newspaper design and content, The Wall Street Journal is a dinosaur. It is America's biggest paper, yet it prints no photographs, seldom carries full reports on big news stories on the front page and writes almost exclusively about business issues.

While America's tabloids are eager to copy The Sun's formula, American broadsheets have so far refused to be anything but high-minded. The New York Times is still being called the "Gray Old Lady", even after introducing colour photographs.

Rising sales figures for British broadsheets are, however, now attracting attention in New York, and nowhere more than on the financially savvy Journal. Dow Jones, the Journal's owner, has money troubles. Its share price has failed to keep up with the Wall Street boom.

Old Journal readers, used to its High Court-style typography, may feel more suicidal on March 20 than at any time since the 1929 crash. The said Journal's first 28-page new issue will follow the tabloid recipe of "mixing news-journalism with fluff about the rich and famous. It will introduce photographs to illustrate gossipy celebrity stories and some pictures will even be printed in colour.

A dummy issue passed to advertisers features a lead story on the family feud surrounding Frank Sinatra. Inside, Great Gatsby-types reveal their golf handicaps and favourite clothing. A column called Catalog Critic will

rate mail-order companies. One headline reads "Cheap thrills with Chardonnay". A piece on corporate raider Ron Perelman enthuses: "He may only wear Armani all week, but weekend it's Wharton gym shorts."

Much to its creator's disdain, the Weekend Journal, published as a fourth section, has already won the nickname "Journal Lite". Joanne Lipman, the section's editor, said: "Nobody who knows me has ever called my work light or soft. We will apply the same Journal sophistication and intelligence in a slightly new arena. Over the years times have changed, society has changed. The distinction between work and play has become more blurred."

Word of the new section reached Wall Street trading floors a few days ago. The famously boisterous men in red braces are yet to be convinced of its merits. A Morgan Stanley employee in his late twenties said: "Consulting the Journal at the weekend would be like asking my mother where to party." But the trader agreed that he would be inclined to take the Weekend Journal home to his fiancée, a designer who works outside New York during the week.

She welcomed the idea: "I will have to get used to reading The Wall Street Journal. My dad used to read it and the tight print and the bland appearance would scare me. I wouldn't want to be a banker if it meant reading something that looks like the phone book. I just hope we won't have to fight over the new section on Saturday mornings."

Advertisers have also given the launch an enthusiastic reception, despite the fact that a full-page ad will cost \$178,000 (£108,000), beating many glossy monthlies.

Journal readers are particularly popular with car companies, fashion houses and travel organisers. Among the advertisers in the dummy issue are Ralph Lauren, Cartier, Jaguar and Callaway, a golf club maker. Almost every right-hand page is filled with a full-page ad, and the left-hand



Bridging the divide between work and play: Joanne Lipman, the new section's editor

pages have at least a quarter-page ad each. Mr Kann is staking his career on winning a big advertising cash boost from the new section. To drum up more advertising still, and to justify the high prices demanded for page ads, the Journal's marketing department has come

up with an unusual set of statistics about its readers. Apparently, the slightly more than one million Journal readers took 33 million holiday trips last year, spent more than \$1.2 billion on home entertainment appliances — and a third of them own two or more homes.

# Naff or inspired? Judge for yourself

Just occasionally elements of common sense intrude, however briefly, into the precious and febrile world of media and marketing. A delicious example came earlier this month when television advertisements by the veteran comedian Bruce Forsyth for Courts furnishes won a clutch of awards. To sophisticates the ads could hardly be more naff and the puns, both verbal and visual — Bruce is in a judge's wig at Courts — could hardly be more elementary. It was not surprising when Bruce turned out to be top contender in a poll for Worst Ad of the Year. But the really important award came not long afterwards: top prize in the furniture industry's advertising effectiveness awards. Bruce and the really naff ad had been shifting sofas and beds like nobody's business. Did the clever-clever Guinness ads of recent memory, for instance, do nearly as well in shifting pints of the dark brew?

The explanation for the success of Bruce Forsyth would seem to be that (apart from the fact that not all members of the mainstream television audience are sophisticated) ads, above all else, have to be noticed — and being almost provocatively irritating is a very effective ploy to attract attention. This is, of course, merely a commonsense observation. But this week Richard Eyre, who used to run an advertising agency media department and is now chief executive of the ITV Network Centre, drew together some of the growing body of research which underpins a commonsense view of how television advertising works.

Of course Eyre, faced with the launch later this year of around 200 channels of digital television and the increasing fragmentation of the audience that is likely to result, had his agenda to pursue at the Financial Times's New Media and Broadcasting conference. It was that network television would endure, and that an advertiser with a single peak-time commercial on ITV could still reach five times as many people as any other single medium.

A cynic would add that the ITV advertiser is also enthusiastically charged for the privilege, but that is not the point. Eyre was able to draw on a wide range of evidence, from sociology to market research, to demonstrate that network television advertising really does seem to work. Some of the most compelling evidence to emerge recently has come from a study by AGB, the market research group. When viewing of ads was checked against household purchases as measured by barcodes, sales rose and went on rising when the ads were repeated. And ads shown in peak time had

more effect than those shown at other times of the day.

The more sociological approach, drawing on the work of the American Paul Laszarsfeld, argues that purchasing behaviour is not a solitary phenomenon whereby an individual sees a message and then acts on it. Rather, media messages are "shared and evaluated within the community".

The theory works at the "micro" level. There is apparently a small surge in sales of Fairy Liquid before Christmas, as cheaper substitutes are hidden away in time for the arrival of mothers-in-law. More recent work in the UK by Laser/BNP has further fleshed out the theory and shown just how much children and partners influence purchasing decisions. More than 90 per cent of purchasers, for instance, claim to have been influenced by children in buying particular brands of breakfast cereal — a process known as "the nag effect". More than 75 per cent claim to have been influenced by their partners on the brands of cake or biscuits chosen.

As Richard Eyre put it, "by all means advertise football boots on sports channels" — but people other than the ultimate buyer should not be seen as "wastage". The truth is that despite the growing number of counter-attractions, 43 million people still watch television each day in the UK. And according to yet more commonsense research, television programmes are still the most talked-about topics in Britain (followed closely by the cost of living, sport, bringing up children and family health).

We watch television, we talk about the programmes and we also talk about the ads, if they are funny enough or irritating enough to get noticed. What is more, advertising seems to work — and to work better the more you use it. This means that the old saw that 50 per cent of advertising works, but nobody knows which 50 per cent, can finally be laid to rest. It also suggests that although the advertising industry may continue to complain about the cost of television advertising — Martin Sorrell of WPP is merely the latest — national commercial networks such as ITV will remain in a strong position for the foreseeable future, whatever happens in digital television. Tightly targeted advertising obviously has its place. A few outtings on channel 75 will scarcely create the word-of-mouth that helps to create leading brands, which advertising guru Jeremy Bullmore believes share "a kind of fame".

It is a conclusion that Bruce Forsyth, and indeed the marketing director of Courts, would undoubtedly regard as simply a matter of common sense.



AN IMPORTANT report into the future of the radio industry to be published today says that it is time to reconsider the privatisation of both BBC Radio 1 and Radio 2 and perhaps BBC local radio. The report, by NERA (National Economic Research Associates), and commissioned by the Commercial Radio Companies Association (CRCA), the trade body, says the services "could well be provided by the commercial sector, and there is a strong industry view that this would be commercially beneficial". It is the most extensive examination of the radio industry since the association commissioned its last detailed study in 1984. Paul Brown, the director of the CRCA, said yesterday that commercial radio had

## Time to sell Radio 1?

grown up a lot since privatisation of Radio 1 was last considered and could now take the extra competition "in its stride". The report also advocates a relaxation of controls on ownership and programming. NERA would like to see commercial radio licences awarded on the basis of programme content, with more general promises of performances than at present, and 12-year licences. It believes that if such an approach worked even

more radical options, such as the removal of programme controls and tenders for 30-40 year licences, should be considered. The report is being published at a time when commercial radio is doing well. Revenues have just topped £100 million for the first time in a single quarter and for the past 12 months commercial radio, also for the first time, has had a larger share of listening than the BBC. NERA is also optimistic about revenues and profits. Profits are expected to rise by 90 per cent in real terms over the period 1996-2007, to reach £125 million. The consultants warn, however, that the introduction of digital radio services could cost £35 million a year out of current profits of about £60 million — another reason why liberalisation of the radio market is necessary.

## Without rhyme, with reason

IN the cutthroat world of advertising, one man's misfortune is invariably another's gain. So all over London non-Equity members have been picking up work over the past few weeks from the dwindling number of actors sticking by their guns in the commercials boycott.

But no one will gain quite as much as the fashionable poet Murray Lachlan Young, the 28-year-old who has proven that "wealthy poet" need not be an oxymoron.

Fresh from signing a £1.1 million recording deal with EMI last summer, Young is the star of two ad campaigns launched this week. The first is a print campaign for the troubled Liberty shoe group. But it's the television campaign that will help Young on the way to his second of the million. He is the star of the new Virgin Atlantic commercials, the fortunate successor to Terence Stamp and Helen Mirren. He is the beneficiary of the latter's decision to decline to appear in a new series of ads because of her support for Equity.

Young's poetry fills the gap left by Mirren's legs as he waxes lyrical about the "cornucopia" of in-flight entertainment and the womb-like

experience of Virgin's "premium economy" service. And it is these ads, rather than poems such as *Casual Sex* and *The Closet Homosexual*, that look set to turn Young into our most populist poet since Pam Ayres.

Mirren may appreciate the delicious irony of Young's new role. He is free to appear in the Virgin ads only because

he had his recent application to join Equity rejected. A case of poetic justice?

SOMETIMES the she-navigators of the ad industry descend into farce so risible that no playwright would dare suggest it. This week's example is the Burger King campaign that isn't. Cheeky new Burger King ads went up on posters on Monday. Taking a cue from the "F.C.U.K. fashion" work, pithy slogans included "King Tasty" and "Clever Burgers".

They were designed to be noticed. No surprise, then, that the next day the tabloids picked up on the ads expressing due shock and outrage, and predicting complaints.

Then the poster contractor received an anonymous telephone call saying that the ads had been banned by the Advertising Standards Authority (the same ASA that

King spokeswoman, they came down in line with the campaign's rotation strategy.

Fast work! And pretty slick marketing from the company with an expensive habit of changing campaigners every year. McDonald's will not be panicking just yet. However, it may be hurried into making the kind of retaliatory price cuts that have proven so damaging in the US.

It's good to see that Harry Enfield, high-minded critic of all overpaid admen who rip off the original ideas of creative artists and exploit struggling actors, has designed to give the ad industry another chance.

Enfield is to star in another campaign for Hula Hoops, in keeping with the contract, but in contrast to the refusal of Helen Mirren and other Equity members to appear in new ads.

He can rest assured that Enfield fans like me will be watching the commercials to ensure that those charlatan admen do not once again steal his Self Righteous Brothers' famous "Oi!" catchphrases. Stefano Hatfield is editor of Campaign.



Stefano Hatfield

THE TIMES

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CHANGING TIMES

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Colleges such as the MPW group offer tuition in several cities. In the north of England there is also a college at Harrogate and the south is well served by colleges in Exeter, Brighton and Rochester. Destinations such as Oxford and Cambridge are very popular at Easter with students choosing to study at Cherwell, Collingham and Oxford Tutorial in Oxford and CCSS in Cambridge. Colleges at Guildford, Croydon and Hendon save commuting to central London, nevertheless, Davies's in Holborn and DLD and Lansdowne in Notting Hill are very popular. In the Midlands colleges such as Bosworth and Irwin offer accommodation, but all colleges will arrange it if they have no boarding house.



Importantly exam results are the focus of CIFE colleges, whether students join for Easter Revision courses, Winter Retakes or full one year or two year courses. Modes in Oxford regularly achieve top grades for prospective medical students and in London, Collingham's results from the Oxford board in November showed their expertise in languages, with all nine students gaining grade A.

Comments from CIFE students range from "Brilliant - I never thought I would be able to understand things so well" to "They made me work harder than I ever thought possible, and I actually enjoyed it". A parent wrote "Wonderful! We are thrilled", and an A level student considered the Easter revision course "Made me much more motivated and I really got down to revision".

Rigorous inspection procedures by CIFE ensure that all member colleges maintain high standards in all areas. Choosing a CIFE college for Easter Revision offers peace of mind at such a vital time in a student's life.

For a list of all CIFE colleges contact Myles Glover, Secretary, at Buckhall Farm, Bull Lane, Bethersden, Kent TN26 3HB (01233 820797).

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# EDUCATION

## Why can't they read?

Are young people getting worse at reading? Yes, says Susan Bassnett, who explains why

This week my eight-year-old son came home with a new reading book. It was a lovely book, with a pretty good narrative, a lot of conversation, and brightly coloured pictures on every page. And the artist had taken pains to ensure that the characters were multi-ethnic and non-sexist. My son thoroughly enjoyed the story, which related how an unpleasant opera singer forced a poor woman to make him a suit of spaghetti, which he wore on stage and showed off, until a dog ran up and ate his trousers.

So why did I go into school next day to see my son's teacher and express misgivings about the large sum of money invested in the reading scheme to which that book belongs?

Before I explain, a point of information: my son is the youngest of four, aged 25, 21, 12 and eight, which means that I have a pretty good perspective on children's reading from the 1970s onwards. I have a good idea of adult reading, too, because I have been an academic working in the field of literature for the same period.

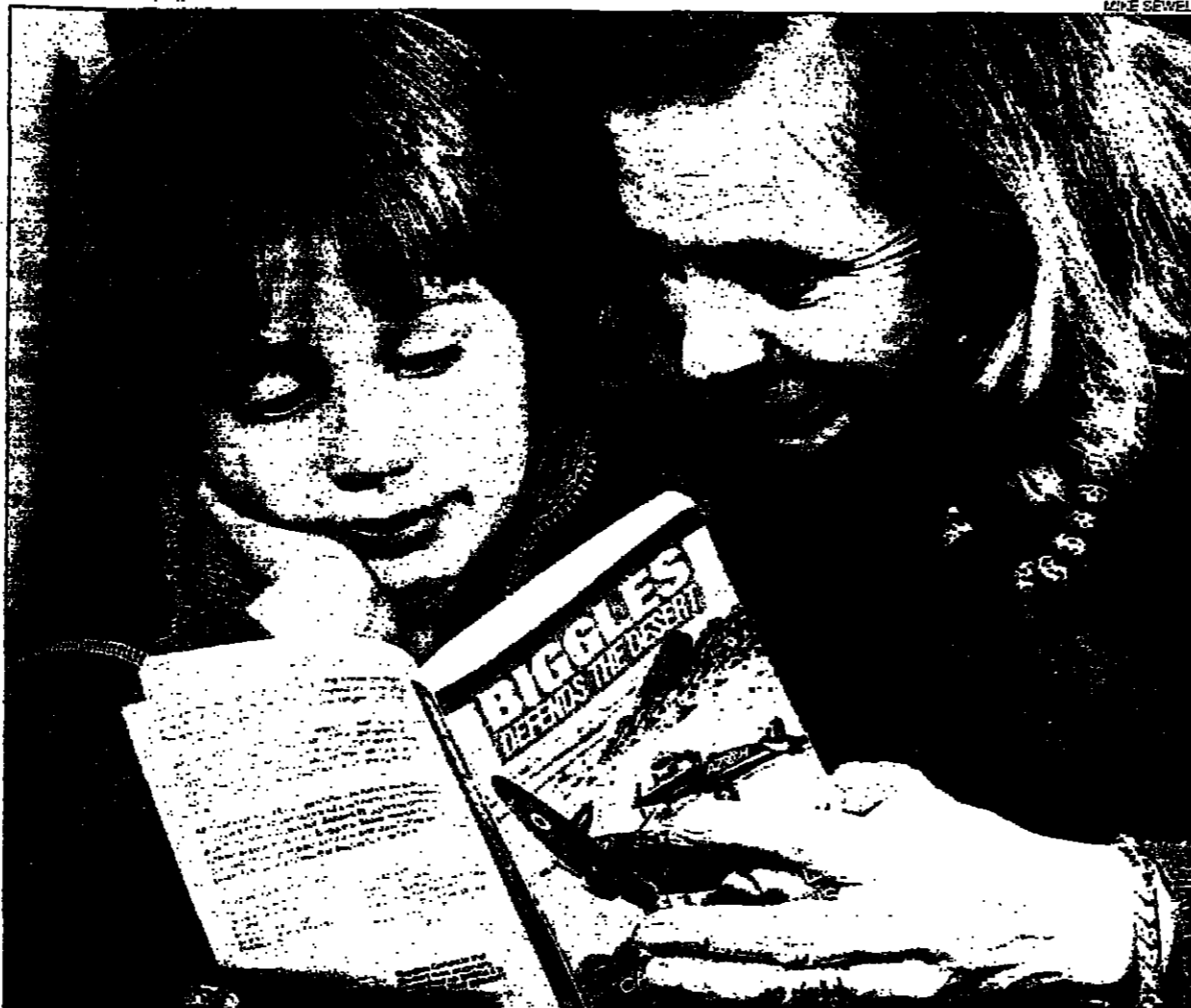
I am involved in the endless debates about whether standards have risen or declined, whether students work more or less hard these days, whether a degree is worth the same as 30 years ago.

One thing is clear and indisputable: students today have problems coping with the amount of reading they are expected to do. Nor is this just a British phenomenon — colleagues from all over the world have shared the same concern with me. Basically, students today have problems because they read far more slowly than even their peers of ten or 15 years ago.

The first time this came home to me was in the early 1980s when I found that students taking my first-year introductory course, despite having the best A-level grades in the faculty, could not read a novel in less than a fortnight. They complained that I had turned two books — Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw* and Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice* in two successive weeks.

When both these books are so short, in my terms, that I would call them novellas rather than novels, my expectation was that a literature student could read either of them in an evening. But my expectation was wrong.

If you compare a British university literature syllabus in 1998 with one from 1968, the differences are obvious. More degrees teach a wider range of texts than ever I had to read, when only great (male) authors were recommended, but the number of texts studied is infinitely less. Where my generation had to read the complete works of writers on the syllabus, today's students read one or two selected works. A course is therefore a list of titles, rather than a list of authors. In short, it is becoming harder and harder for today's students, who I do not believe are any less



Susan Bassnett reads to Luke, her youngest son. She wants him to be eventually capable of reading two novels in two weeks

gifted and hard-working than any previous generations, to read in a sustained manner.

As a parent, my tactic with reading started out in the same way with each child. I never tried to teach them at home before they started school. Instead, I read to them and let them pretend to read to me, as they learnt favourite books by heart. When they did start school, I read every night until the child was about 11, by which time they could read as fast as I could. I always read books that were slightly ahead of the child's own skills.

The first two children followed roughly the same pattern: they both read avidly every night. They also watched television. I never subscribed to the book v technology split.

But child number three did not make the same leap forward in reading that her sisters had done around age eight. She was bringing home reading books filled with brightly coloured pictures, not one of which was more than 25 pages long. She could read them in minutes and the school was giving her a new book each week. I was told that children needed pictures and large print, that the vocabulary was designed to stretch them and help them to develop language skills. But, I countered, what about the long read that draws you into a book, lifts you into a different universe? The teacher accused me of

putting undue pressure on my child and of having unrealistic expectations. I moved Rosie to an independent school immediately, where she spent two years trying to meet the standard of her fellow pupils. I felt that I had failed her, and she still has problems reading for sustained periods.

My son is at a prep school. Before Christmas, his reading book was Book 5 of the Wide Range Readers, a book of 176 pages, some illustrations but basically an anthology of stories. He was reading it with enthusiasm and good will, as he had the other books in the series. At bedtime, I was reading him *Biggles: The Camels are Coming*, and he was rereading *Biggles Goes East*, alternated with a book about sharks.

So when he came home last week, with his brightly coloured new book, all of 25 pages, and read it from cover to cover in under five minutes, word perfect and gabbling, I was incredulous. His teacher explained that they had a lot of complaints about the old reading scheme. The new scheme, she said, came with worksheets as well, so each time a child finishes a book, they have to do the worksheets, which enables the teacher to monitor whether they have understood what they have been reading.

worksheets at the rate of three a week. This means he is likely to have finished all the books in the series before the end of term. He enjoys the books and the worksheets, so no problem there. In addition, he is back on the old-fashioned reading books. But I still feel uneasy: there seems to be a link between my students' inability to read long books for sustained periods of time and the way in which children are being taught to read. All kinds of factors appear to be involved: the shortness of the books, the size of the print, the number of illustrations combine to make the book seem more like a magazine or a comic. Comics have also changed, using far fewer words than they once did. One could say the same thing about newspapers: even the so-called quality papers have more white space, more illustrations, and fancier sub-headings and more boxes and borders.

This is our reality, and the clock cannot go backwards. But my concern is that if reading is always a quick fix, a five or ten-minute dash through a text cluttered with all kinds of distractions, will there be anyone left in 50 years' time who can read a novel by Thomas Hardy or George Eliot, let alone by Samuel Richardson or Tolstoy in less than a month or two?

● Professor Bassnett is Pro-Vice-Chancellor responsible for academic quality at the University of Warwick.

The style of children's books combines to make them seem more like comics

### Susan Elkin offers GCSE and A levels advice

## The break that can make you a study winner

For the many pupils due to sit GCSE and A levels this year, the coming Easter holiday will be the last chance for detailed revision. This is the time to make decisions about the best use of that break.

One possibility is to enrol in a revision course at one of the many providing institutions that advertise at this time of year. In a week you can study one A-level subject or perhaps two or three GCSE subjects intensively all day. Detailed instruction is given to small groups. Practice essays are set, marked and discussed daily so that confidence and competence rise appreciably as the week progresses. It is an effective method of shoring up a likely failure or lifting grades for those whose hopes would otherwise be modest.

But there are also disadvantages. First, most maintained-sector schools break for only a fortnight or so at Easter and because schools then end and begin their terms mid-week, there may be only one continuous calendar week available to do a revision course.

Those who spend a whole week on just one or two subjects may well find themselves short of time to revise the others, although this may be less of a problem for independent-school pupils — especially boarders, who usually have longer holidays.

Secondly, of course, a week-long, intensive revision course is an expensive option. Parents who are unable to stump up a three-figure fee will, inevitably, have to guide their examination candidate offspiring towards constructive methods of self-help.

Fortunately, with sensible forward planning, there is plenty that do-it-yourselfers can do. The first task for this term is to get any outstanding coursework out of the way. Most schools will insist that this is more or less completed for most subjects before Easter. Wise students will work ahead.

Next, face up to what has to be done. And do it today. Look at every subject and be honest about what needs revising. Once you have assessed the size and nature of the task, construct a revision timetable for the Easter holidays. You will then feel more in charge and less terrified by the prospect of all that work that you were afraid — wrongly — was impossible.

guage is best revised on a "drip-feed" principle, so tackle just a small section of vocabulary, key phrases and grammar rules each day. Working through past papers is a great help with maths and English revision. History, on the other hand, involves a lot of committing facts to memory.

Avoid revising any one subject at the expense of the others. It's tempting to focus all your attention on the exams that come early in the exam calendar. If you do, you risk running out of time to revise for the last few papers.

Psychologists say that the brain responds well to variety. In other words, it's best not to impose too much of one sort of learning on it at once. Try planning, say, a two-hour session to include short bursts of four or five different subjects. But remember that teachers and other adults all have their own ideas about how revision should be done and what works for one person won't necessarily work for another. So it's worth consulting widely.

Make sure you have everything for revision ready and organised in advance. Index cards with notes can help, as can any relevant audio tapes and videos you may be able to borrow from your school or college. Get all the books, notes and any past exam papers you want to look at well before the Easter holidays begin. If your school is reluctant to part with past papers, you can buy them from the exam boards — or they are often printed in revision guides sold by bookshops — but bear in mind that this year's GCSE exams are the first to test new syllabuses so that most past papers will not follow the exact pattern of the ones to be sat this summer.

Some schools and colleges open during the Easter holidays to give pupils access to specialist facilities such as computers. Moreover, some teachers even run voluntary revision sessions at their schools. Make use of any such opportunity.

No one can — or should try to — work for every minute of the last holiday before the exams. You also need some time off to "limber up" before you enter the final straight. (Your last exam is the finishing tape.)

It should, for example, be possible — with proper planning and self-discipline — to work at revision in the mornings and to relax in the afternoons. Or try working alternate days. Devise a working method, schedule and a pace that suits you. Good luck!

● The author has been a teacher for 30 years.



### Debating criteria for charitable status gives independent schools a way of proving their value, says Anne Lee

Are private schools charitable enterprises? Most are registered as such. They do not make a profit and parents of pupils at independent schools are willing to pay twice: once in fees and once through their taxes. So runs the argument of the increasingly gainfully independent sector.

There are major implications of schools being regarded as charities. First, they have a moral obligation to do more than educate the rich; secondly, they are able to raise funds with tax advantages; and, thirdly, they are unable to remunerate their trustees. Company directors are likely to be appointed for specific skills and be paid for their time.

At the moment independent schools have accepted Stephen Byers's olive branch and the much vaunted "partnership" phase is beginning to take shape. Christopher Parker, the chairman of the Government Advisory Group on Independent/State School Partnerships, is Headmaster of the respected (private) traditional grammar school, Nottingham High. £500,000 has been made available for grants to those who propose suitable schemes.

Relationships between the independent and state sectors have not always been good. To hear that there is warm co-operation between LEAs and independent schools over nursery provision sounds suspicious. Have the left-wing teachers been bribed or have the independent schools capitulated to the notion of comprehensives?

Neither is true. The *Good Neighbours* report, published by Isis this month, showed that while 80 per cent of independent schools may let their premises to Brownie packs and for other community uses, less than 20 per cent have their premises used by state schools.



Uppingham School raised £2 million for an arts and media centre after an appeal directed by staff

## How charity can be a private function

status. Schools are increasingly in the business of running appeals for funds. Often neither the income from fees nor the maintained sector grants are sufficient to create good new school buildings.

Fundraising consultants promise great riches. "Donations of £2 million will be yours." The chairman of governors may have been hoping to hear this promise for ages. Others may believe that they have heard similar claims, but we all want our schools to survive and grow, so governors bury their doubts and get on with paying the fundraiser's fee.

An elegant invitation requesting your company to bear a presentation about "the past, the present and the future" should set the alarm bells ringing. There have even been some

presentations to elderly past-pupils where the widow's mite has been rebuffed as being "too small an offering". To insist on donations of more than £5,000 might nationally help the appeals table, but it does not engender goodwill.

The worst type of campaign companies can come from overseas. If they have little conscience, they can run far to avoid others catching up with them.

The appeals that are successful are generally run by a senior member of staff who has known and cared for generations of past pupils and their families.

He or she is the teacher who will be welcomed at many functions because parents know that this is a truly selfless person. Uppingham raised £2

million for an imposing arts and media centre this way. Wycombe Abbey has also managed its appeals in-house, and has a waterside concert hall thanks to its "Seniors".

Appeals in the immediate future are likely to focus on offering scholarships and bursaries to counteract the effect of the loss of assisted places. However, endowing a capital fund to pay fees for one scholarship at £13,000 a year for a boarding place would require a gift of more than £150,000. One such scholarship offer to begin every year (each covering five years of education) would require £750,000.

These sorts of figures demonstrate why (even for day places) the Girls' Day School Trust has had to set itself a target of £70 million to try to rescue

3,000 assisted places. It has been building up this fund for the past ten years.

In practice, an effective appeal will take years, and governing bodies devote themselves if they believe otherwise. A well-managed school should not need to move in haste. They should have set aside a good percentage of income for building maintenance and projects. Sarum Hall Prep School in Hampstead diligently saved for 25 years before being able to move to its new award-winning building.

American schools are far more successful at raising funds because it is built into their culture and their favourable tax structure. Their school annual reports list many substantial donors by name, and they engender competition among past pupils' year groups by showing what percentage of the total each group has raised.

Substantial donations on either side of the Atlantic often bring strings with them. Some overseas donors may want to ensure that their language or culture is taught, others may insist on a seat on the board to ensure that their money is wisely spent. Usually some suitable negotiation can take place to keep all parties happy, but occasionally there is dissent.

There are other creative and mutually supportive sponsorship arrangements possible. Just like ethical investing, hours can be spent debating ethical sponsorship and whether, for example, tobacco or confectionery companies should become involved in schools.

The opportunity to link your family's name for ever, and often visibly, to a part of a school you loved can be very rewarding. It is important to make sure that most of your donation reaches its home, and is not hijacked by anonymous campaign expenses.

The review of the criteria for awarding charitable status is likely to take several years. Independent schools are safe on that front — for the time being. They have a window of opportunity to prove that they can contribute to the needs of education as a whole.

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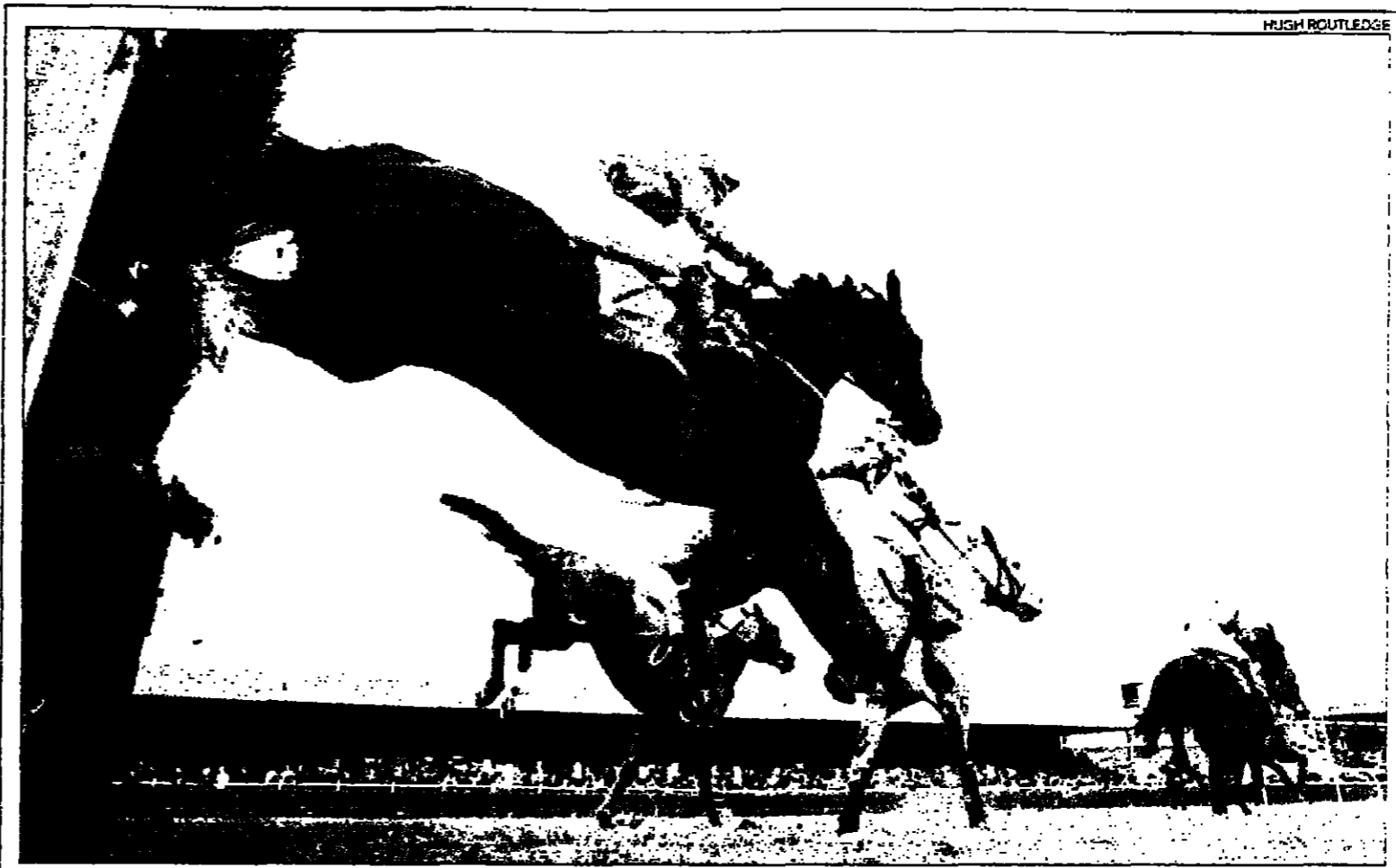
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Ramsden verdict puts pressure on Thompson

By Richard Evans, Racing Correspondent

TOMMO — as Derek Thompson is known throughout racing — is renowned for being impervious to embarrassment or criticism, but last night his rhinoceros-hide qualities faced their sternest test after the personally humiliating outcome of the Ramsden trial.

"We remain completely supportive of Derek. There is no intention of his role in Channel 4 racing being cast into doubt whatsoever," Franklin said yesterday.



Go Ballistic, nearest, bides his time with a circuit to run in the Jim Ford Chase at Wincanton yesterday before going on to win convincingly

Go Ballistic leaves promise empty

By Our Racing Staff

STRONG PROMISE failed his addition for next month's Tote Cheltenham Gold Cup when outstayed by Go Ballistic in the Jim Ford Challenge Cup at Wincanton yesterday.

"Obviously I am disappointed, but Norman said the horse blew up and he told me to get some work into him," Hubbard's assistant, Chris Kinane, said.

Richard Evans: Nape Millcroft Riviera (2-20 Kempton Park) Millcroft returns after a 42-day absence but goes well fresh and looks well handicapped on his planned effort behind Jefferys.

I'm Supposin, who has taken time to regain his confidence since chipping two bones in a fetlock in last season's Scottish Champion Hurdle, returned to his best with an impressive 19-length defeat of Master Beveled in the grade two Axminster 100 Kingwell Hurdle.

and we had a real gallop on as he needed a race like that to put him spot on for the Champion Hurdle. He's a galloper and could have gone round again," Ruwe said.



Thompson disappointed

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Details. Includes '2.00 Duke's Mount' and '2.30 Campaign'.

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Details. Includes '3.35 MICROGEN HANDICAP HURDLE' and '4.10 MAD HATTER NOVICES CHASE'.

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Details. Includes 'Wincanton' and 'Huntingdon'.

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Details. Includes 'KEMPTON PARK' and 'THUNDER'.

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Details. Includes '3.45 MAJOR NOVICES CHASE' and '4.20 PORTLAND HANDICAP CHASE'.

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Details. Includes '4.50 KEMPTON PARK NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE' and 'COURSE SPECIALISTS'.

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Details. Includes '2.00 TWEEDLE DUM NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE' and '2.30 QUEEN OF HEARTS HANDICAP HURDLE'.

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Details. Includes '4.40 WELCOME BREAK GROUP HUNTERS CHASE' and 'FORM FOCUS'.

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Details. Includes 'Huntingdon' and 'Lingfield Park'.

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Details. Includes 'SOUTHWELL' and '2.20 FAIRFIELD APPOINTMENTS MAIDEN HANDICAP'.

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Details. Includes '3.55 ASLOCKTON HANDICAP' and '4.30 WELLOW SELLING STAKES'.

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Details. Includes '5.00 EAST STAKE HANDICAP' and 'COURSE SPECIALISTS'.

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Details. Includes '3.05 W V LANGENBERGER HANDICAP CHASE' and 'FORM FOCUS'.

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Details. Includes '5.10 LEVY BOARD NOVICES HURDLE' and 'FORM FOCUS'.

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Details. Includes 'Lingfield Park' and '2.55 REESTHORPE CLAIMING STAKES'.

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Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Details. Includes '5.00 EAST STAKE HANDICAP' and 'COURSE SPECIALISTS'.

RACELINE 0930 1684. HAYDOCK KEMPTON SOUTHWELL 6 HOURS SERVICE 1684. Includes contact information and race details.

# Far too early for depression to be allowed free rein

THE defeat at Twickenham has had the effect of the well-aimed punch by a trained heavyweight to the solar plexus of a man who prefers to lurch, splendidly and regularly, and would only with petulant sulks contemplate any form of physical jerk. The Welsh rugby fraternity has been stunned.

That is not because the defeat was inflicted by the old enemy — there have been enough of those — but rather it was the manner of it and the difficulty in analysing quite what caused so dramatic a collapse.

Wales had relished a start that must have been beyond their expectations. There were two tries and their scrum was causing discomfort to England. Howley's tactics were right and Arwel Thomas, apart from a sliced kick or two, was following the right pattern to push England back. England, for their part, had already shown signs that Clive Woodward was going to ignore forever any thoughts of reverting to the tactics of previous regimes. England were running. It was proving to be a good, teasing contest. Then, everything fell apart for Wales.

There is a gloom in the country, of an ominously deadly nature. We have encountered dejection before. Wales's rugby began losing its edge in the early 1980s but even when they went to New Zealand, after the first World Cup, and suffered defeats on a grand scale, it was only a matter of time, it was felt, before they would be back on the road to success. The time has come and gone but the record is not getting any better. After Saturday, there are dark mutterings, questioning whether it ever will. People are calling for changes without really suggesting who should come in.

All this is premature. To begin with, Wales still has three matches to play in this championship. For the moment, therefore, a proper assessment can wait. It has to be borne in mind that if England played fluently last Saturday they did not do so in Paris, where they were lucky to

GERALD DAVIES



Rugby Commentary

escape so lightly. If England squandered chances at Twickenham, then so did New Zealand and France against them.

On the basis of two contrasting championship games for England, where lies the true form and standard? We will have to wait for further evidence.

To reach their present pre-eminence, the All Blacks began changing their perceptions of how the game should be played and the break they needed to make came in the World Cup of 1991. John Hart, their present coach, was then assistant to Alex Wyllie. They did not make the final in that year. They did so in 1995, but lost. With growing conviction they refrained from reverting to their old, safer ways, and since then they have had the rugby world at their feet.

But look, you may say, at



Jenkins: out of position

the margin of England's victory. To what extent, though, we should ask, is the game changing, and with it, accordingly, our expectations? The old scores may be vanishing.

Again we look to the southern hemisphere. The results in the Super 12 series last season were invariably of the type we would usually associate with basketball. Indeed, the scores are not dissimilar to those achieved at Twickenham and Murrayfield last weekend, where, interestingly, the referees in both instances were from New Zealand.

The gap in interpretation between north and south is vast. England, quite rightly, adapted themselves more readily to a mood that allows for a looser environment, where opportunities for tries are more abundant. After all, converted tries, as opposed to penalties, can soon distance one team from the other in a manner hitherto restricted by the laws; or at least by adherence to the strict letter of the law. The changing scorelines are also beginning to appear on the club scene.

England were grateful for the attacking awareness of Matthew Perry. He has resilience, too. It hardly looked likely that he would get up on his feet after Scott Gibbs's heavy charge on him near his own 22-metre line, but the full back did not simply get up and dust himself down. He almost disdainfully took a quick penalty to initiate a running movement that could well have ended with a score. A team and its players must strike the right attitude.

With Neil Jenkins unfamiliar to the position at full back — he has now told Bowring that he does not want to play in that position again — Wales do not have the extra option that so opens up the field to the wingers and creates the choices and decoys in mid-field. Thus they were a half a man short of a full complement before going on the field. England, along with France, are aspiring to a kind of game that forces others in Europe to change their perceptions of what to expect. It is brave and exciting. It is up to the others to follow.

# Brewer gives West direction

David Hands on a cosmopolitan team intent on promoting the North East

After the chaos experienced by West Hartlepool over the past two seasons, which has seen directors of rugby and players coming and going like actors in a farce and the loss of the club's first-division status, there has been a comforting stability this season. All of a sudden Brierton Lane has become a welcoming, but distinctly uncomfortable, place for visiting teams.

Only Rotherham have won there in the Allied Dunbar Premiership and that on the opening day of the season, since when West have undergone a transformation. They are one of four teams on 18 points in the second division, with games in hand on their rivals. They are handily placed for the play-offs, if not for automatic promotion and, tomorrow, they play Sale for a place in the semi-finals of the Tedy's Bitter Cup.

They have appeared in quarter-finals on three previous occasions but they have never progressed to the final four. Against first-division opponents they will be underdogs again but, if their formidable pack can gain the upper hand, few would write them off, not with the points-scoring ability of one New Zealander, Stephen Vile, at fly half, and the acute preparation of another, Mike Brewer, as director of rugby.

Salé have exactly the same assets in the same positions: Simon Mannix and John Mitchell, the England assistant coach, who is well aware of Brewer's capability. As a back-row forward, Brewer won 32 caps for the All Blacks and, given any normal luck with injuries, he would have won many more and would probably have captained the side ahead of Sean Fitzpatrick.

Brewer arrived at Hartlepool from Blackrock College in Dublin in the summer in the wake of Mark Ring's departure, looked at the playing squad and promptly released 17 players.

The financial and administrative sides of the club were restructured and the business sense that made Brewer successful with a sportswear



Brewer sees the Tedy's Bitter Cup quarter-final against Sale tomorrow as a yardstick to gauge the revival taking shape at West Hartlepool. Photograph: David Rogers/Allsport

company was applied, together with the man-management skills learnt in provincial rugby with Otago and Canterbury, as well as with the All Blacks.

He also pulled in playing talent that the club could not only afford but who would survive in the top flight if West achieve their ambition of promotion. They include Vile, the Auckland player for Castres, Mark Giachetti, the Australian lock capped by Italy, Philippe Farnier, the France A lock, and Tu'u

Nu'ual'ita, the Western Samoa scrum half. They have blended with local players like James Ponton and Sean Cassidy.

"Each player has a positional description which outlines his core responsibilities," Brewer, 33, said. "They have become more and more efficient at their individual responsibilities, their error-rate is reduced and they are dominating possession more. We have a basic pattern, we try to play open-style rugby, but the players are

satisfied that they can change their game-plan and still be successful — as we had to do against Orell last week.

"I've tried to show that we are not New Zealanders, or Frenchmen or Australians, we are trying to develop a northeastern culture in the team. The players accept their responsibility to spectators and sponsors, they mix and mingle far different from last year. We are looking at the Sale game as a yardstick, to see how far we have come as individuals and as a team."

# Ireland call up Ward from the third division

By DAVID HANDS RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

IRELAND'S new coaching panel pulled one new rabbit out of the hat yesterday when they named a 23-man squad to prepare for the Five Nations Championship meeting with France in Paris on March 7. Andy Ward, a New Zealand-born flanker playing in the third division of the All-Ireland League, is one of four specialist back-row forwards in the squad from which the XV will be named next Wednesday.

Ward, 27, plays for Ballinahinch and works in Ulster as one of the Irish Rugby Football Union's development officers. He comes from Whangarei, in New Zealand's North Island, and played a handful of games for Waikato — the province of Warren Gatland, the new Ireland coach — before moving to settle in Ireland. He qualifies by residency and has been a regular this season in Ulster's provincial and European campaigns.

At 6ft 3in and 151 lb, Ward offers a distinct physical presence in a position that Ireland have struggled to fill satisfactorily since Denis McBride's international demise.

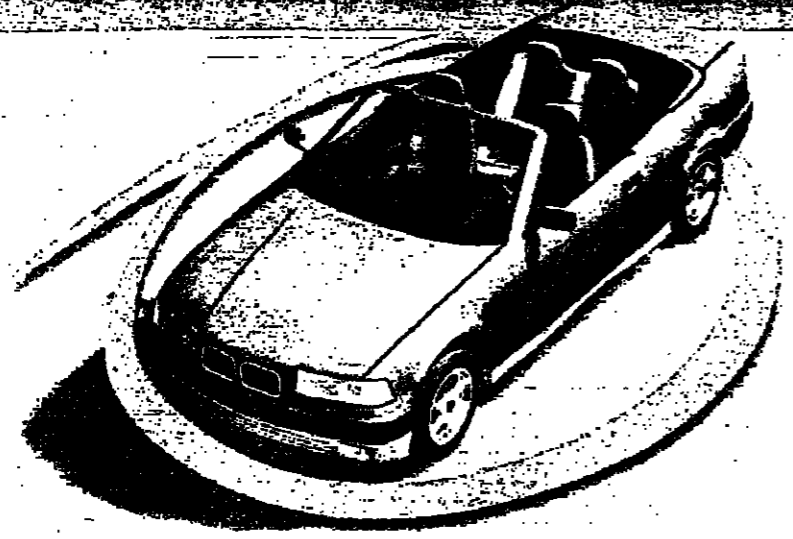
Ward is one of five players to be elevated to the senior squad compared with the 22 on duty in the 16-17 defeat by Scotland at Lansdowne Road earlier this month. Three of that quintet — Rob Henderson, Conor McGuinness and Peter Clohessy — are fit again after injuries but the fourth, Mick Galwey, has not played a senior international since the defeat by Western Samoa in 1996.

However, Galwey, capped 22 times and a British Isles representative in 1993, has been playing consistently well for Shamrock this season and is experienced.

IRELAND SQUAD: Backs: C O'Shea (London Irish), D Hickey (S Myer's College), R Wallace (Shannon), R Henderson (Wexford), K Messer (Bristol), M McCull (London Irish), E Egan (Galwegians), D Humphreys (London Irish), C McGuinness (S Myer's College), P Foran (Cork), P O'Brien (Cork), P O'Connell (Young Munster), R Corteen (Crawstons), P O'Connell (Newcastle), P Wallace (Shannon), R Neele (Newcastle), K Wood (Hull), A O'Shea (Shannon), P O'Shea (Shannon), M O'Leary (London Irish), D Conroy (Bristol), K Dawson (London Irish), E Miller (Leicester), A Ward (Ballinahinch).

THE TIMES THE SUNDAY TIMES

# YOU'LL SELL YOUR CAR FASTER WHEN YOU RING TIMES CLASSIFIED.

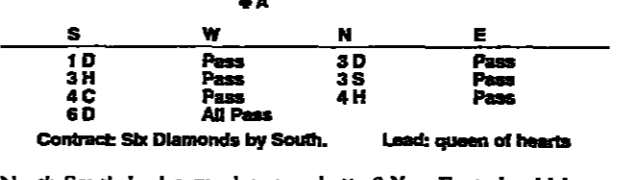


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## SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

"Elimination and endplay" is a fearsome phrase and some would argue that it is not a suitable subject for a Refresher. Some endplays are very complicated but there are simple forms.



North-South had a good auction, cue-bidding their way to the excellent slam. The slam depends on not losing more than one spade trick. Looking at the spade suit in isolation, this is a good prospect as all it requires is for West to have at least one of the honours — a 75 per cent shot. However, once West has not led a spade the contract is 100 per cent.

Declarer wins the ace of hearts and draws trumps. He now cashes the ace of clubs, plays a heart to the king, ruffs a club, ruffs a heart and ruffs a club. He now plays a spade to dummy's jack. East wins with the queen but that is the end of the defence. If he plays back a heart or a club declarer will ruff in one hand, discarding a spade from the other; if he plays back a spade declarer will make two tricks in the suit.

Could the defence have done better? Yes, East should have doubled Three Spades; then West leads a spade and East has a safe exit card after he has won the first trick.

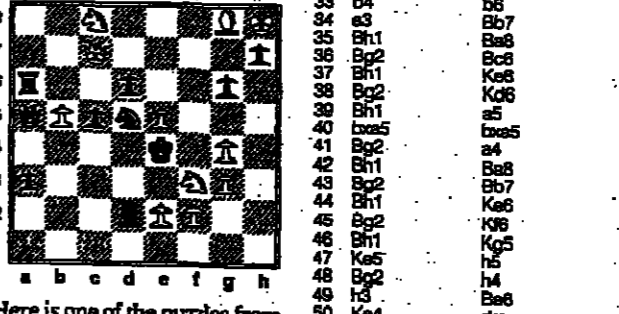
Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

## KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Problem championship The British Chess Solving Championship was held at Oakham School on Saturday February 21. Results were as follows:

- 1. Jonathan Mestel 25.75; 2. Roddy McKay 18.25; 3. Ian Watson 18.0; 4. Malcolm McDonald 16.5; 5. Paul Curran 12.5; 6. John Lawrence 12.75; 7. Lyndon Gurr 11.25.



Here is one of the puzzles from the championship to test your chess IQ. White is to play and mate in two moves. Solution at the end of the article.

Linares In the fourth round at Linares, Ivanchuk drew with Kasparov.

Black to play. This position is from the game Lopez — Milton, 1997. Black's concentration of force on the kingside now allowed him a surprising winning coup. How did he continue? Solution on page 54

WORD-WATCHING By Philip Howard

- SORICINE a. Killing one's sister b. Like a shrew c. Early colour film
- STUBBARD a. An apple b. A dagger scabbard c. The stubble at the hedgerow
- SWADESHI a. A witch doctor b. An Indian language c. Boycott
- SPRENDES a. Traps b. A cattle disease c. Carpenter's wedges

Answers on page 54

Doubts access... on makes... lding lo

FOOTBALL: NOADES EXPRESSES RESERVATIONS ON TAKEOVER DEAL

Doubts are raised over success of Palace coup

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

DOUGLAS have been cast... The takeover did not appear so smooth yesterday, with Juventus denying that they had received any shares.

Under the terms of the agreement, Goldberg will pay £10 million now and a further £20 million by October, when Noades will stand down as chairman.

projects in mind, so perhaps he wouldn't be able to do them if he were to become manager at Crystal Palace.

Palace's FA Cup defeat will at least concentrate their minds on their fight against relegation from the Premier League.



Venables offer

Horton makes grand entrance

By NICK SZCZEPANIK

Gillingham's Priestfield Stadium. Only Doncaster Rovers, seven points worse off, seem likely to spare Brighton from relegation to the Vauxhall Conference.

position." The appointment is likely to prove popular with supporters, who remember Horton as an inspiring midfielder.

Don Hutchison has completed his £1 million transfer from Sheffield United to Everton, which takes the defender, Jon O'Connor, in the opposite direction.

POTTERS Leisure Resort, situated in Hopton-on-Sea, on the Norfolk coast, is the impressive venue this year for the English Women's Indoor Bowling Association national championships.



Coulson makes smooth progress to the semi-finals against an imposing backdrop

Price blocked by Potters bar

By DAVID RHYS JONES

Mary Price, who has won the title three times, was immediately installed as favourite but she made an undignified first-round exit.

Edson was herself toppled by Ann Hill, who reached the contract for the International Open next October.

Yielded to Shaw in the semi-finals last year, he reached the same stage again. Today Ashby plays Hill, while Jeanette Coulson, a regular international from York, takes on Liz Shorter.

Spalding look to day of fortune

Non-League Football by Walter Gammie

THE task of stopping the march to Wembley of Tiverton Town and Taunton Town, the Screwfix Direct League rivals, in the FA Carlsberg Vase quarter-finals tomorrow falls to Spalding United and Portlithven Town.

Cross last week. Alan Day, their manager, boasts a lively goalscorer in Ronnie Fortune and a tireless recent recruit in Tuncay Korukmaz.

time this season - having knocked out Sudbury Town. Brian Devereux, their top scorer, is suspended so Wanderers have taken the precaution of signing Dave Fleming, formerly of Kingstonsian, from Wivenhoe Town as a replacement.

Public Notices section containing various legal notices and advertisements.

LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

0171-782 7344

PUBLIC NOTICES

THE LICENSING ACT 1964... CHARITY COMMISSION... DUTCH LEAGUE... RUGBY UNION... SAILING... TENNIS... ROWING... SNOW REPORTS...

LEGAL NOTICES

European Commission... THE INSOLVENCY ACT 1986... THE INSOLVENCY ACT 1986... THE INSOLVENCY ACT 1986...

LEGAL NOTICES

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Table with columns for BASKETBALL, BOWLS, CRICKET, FOOTBALL, and SCHOOLS MATCHES. Lists various sports events and results.

Table with columns for BASS FISH CUP, AFRICAN NATIONS CUP, SPANISH LEAGUE, DUTCH LEAGUE, RUGBY UNION, SAILING, TENNIS, ROWING, and SNOW REPORTS. Lists various sports events and results.

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Advertisement for Mobil North Sea Limited, featuring a map of the North Sea and text about fuel services and publications.

Table with columns for SNOW REPORTS, listing snow conditions in various regions like France, Italy, and Germany.

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Vertical text on the left margin: Ireland call up Ward from the third division, By David Hands, IRLAND'S new coach...

Vertical text on the right margin: O'Sullivan less than charitable to Drago, By Phil Yates, RONNIE O'SULLIVAN produced an unstoppable burst...

GOLF

# Fast greens make it plain sailing for contented Norman

FROM JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT, IN DUBAI

FEW golfers travel the world in the manner of Greg Norman. He gets on and off aeroplanes as others use trains. Two weeks ago he was competing at a tournament in South Africa as he slowly wound his way home to Florida after events in Australia. Now he is in Dubai, at a course he likes and on which he plays well.

After the opening round of the Desert Classic, he is tied for second place behind Robert Karlsson. It is just as well Norman has his own aeroplane and air crew, although if he did have to fly commercially he could accumulate an impressive total of air miles.

A 67, five under par, puts Norman among a group of four players completed by Ignacio Garrido, 26, Stephen Allan, who is 24 but looks ten years younger, and Andrew Coltart.

Though Norman, 43, is resident in the United States and Coltart, a Scot, is 16 years younger, they do share some similarities, not least that both are tall and slim. Coltart, born in Dumfriesshire, leads the Australian Order of Merit, and he and Norman, an Australian, played two rounds together in that country's Open two months ago.

"He played well," Norman said of those two rounds. "He won the Australian PGA at the New South Wales golf club, which is a tough test of golf so obviously he has a lot of game about him."

The Emirates course may not be as tough, but with ribbons of fairway set down amid expanses of sand, it is a good test as well as being easy on the eye.

Most days, in the early afternoon, a wind gets up to make holes like the bit, which bends to the right and rises significantly to the green from where the tee-shot ends, particularly difficult.

An added difficulty this year is that the greens are faster than usual. Norman said that they were as fast as any he has experienced in the past 12

months, quicker even than those of Augusta, though without the unnerving borrows that make putting at the Masters so difficult.

Norman plays well here. He has twice been runner-up and 13 of his rounds have been below par. He was 14 under par in 1994, 15 under the next year and 16 under in 1997. That is good golf indeed and it is no wonder Norman likes this oasis in the desert. "I feel comfortable here," he said. "I



Karlsson: early leader

enjoy the surroundings. I enjoy the people and I like the greens. They are always firm and fast."

He said that mastering the greens was the secret of scoring well, but he might have added that he enjoyed the challenges presented from the tees. Norman is one of the

world's longest and straightest drivers. If you do not drive accurately here, this becomes a difficult course.

Colin Montgomerie, to name but one, found that out at the 18th, where his drive caught a tree and his ball ended in a sandy wasteland, and at the 1st, where he went too far to the left. He dropped strokes on both holes but was not dissatisfied with his 70.

Coltart is one of a talented stable of players managed with a rare touch by Andrew Chandler, known as Chubby because of his frame. Lee Westwood and Darren Clarke are the front-runners of that particular group.

Last year Coltart was playing in almost every event in a frantic and ultimately fruitless attempt to get into the Ryder Cup, Dunhill and World Cup teams. At one point he played in 13 successive events without getting the reward that he felt he was due. "There was nothing wrong with the way I was playing, though I was starting to think there was," he said.

One day, he and Paul McGinley, another of Chandler's players, were talking and wondering whether they weren't getting left behind by their friends. "Darren and Lee were playing fantastically well and Paul and I were plodding away with nothing much going right for us," Coltart said.

They decided that they should not worry about it and just get on with matters. Almost immediately their fortunes began to improve. McGinley's response was to help Ireland to win the World Cup in South Carolina last November. When partnered by Padraig Harrington. Not to be outdone, Coltart, that same week, won the Australian PGA, laying the basis of his present success in Australia.

Yesterday, Clarke, 68, and Westwood, 69, were close to Coltart but McGinley, who has torn a cartilage in his right side, had a 72.

### DETAILS

Great Britain and Ireland unless stated

LEADING FIRST-ROUND SCORES: 66: R Karlsson (Swe), 67: Garrido (Esp), G Norman (Aus), 68: D Clarke, P Price, S Ballesteros (Esp), I Woollam, R Wiesner (Ger), M A Martin (Sri), J Siroj (Thai), 69: P Hedberg (Swe), L Westwood, P Balar, M Patek (U), V Phillips, M Medendorp, D Tosierra, P U Johnson (Sri), J M Oosthuis (Esp), A Forsbrand (Swe), R Maritz (Hol), A Haurar 70: D Robertson, S Bottomley, C Montgomerie, M Davis, P Hougoud (Nor), G Brand Jr, A Cabrera (Arg), P Spillard (Swe), C Whistler (Sri), S Shaver (Sri), C Tse-Peng (Taiwan), P Fuller (Swe), 71: A Okonon, M James, S Yonemura, R Burns, P L Lantz, N Johansson (Fin), R McFarlane, F Hange (Swe), M Tunnicliffe, Z Lian-Wen (Chin), R Sober, M A Emeis (Esp), G Orr, E Elin (Sri), P Oates (Swe), I Garbutt, A Wall, M Halberg (Swe), P Eales, M Jozson (Swe), J Cocoros (Arg), J Jacobson (Swe).

# Ballesteros has old gleam in his eye

JOHN HOPKINS



Golf Commentary

THE capacity to fight up a tournament and send spectators stampeding from one fairway to another is given to very few. Arnold Palmer did it nearly 40 years ago and Tiger Woods is doing it now. From time to time, Greg Norman can raise his game to remarkable levels and so can Nick Price, but the one golfer above all others both players and spectators want to see back near his best, to remind us all of how he could make lining up a 12-foot putt an exciting act of theatre, is Severiano Ballesteros.

We have not seen the old Seve for years, not consistently anyway. More's the pity. Sightings of his genius have been glimpsed and passed from one aficionado to another. Did you see him play that four-wood off his knees in Paris, they ask. Anyone who saw it will never tire of recounting a piece of pure magic in Switzerland in 1993. Ballesteros was confronted by a wall. No problem, he said, whisking out a wedge and hitting his ball almost vertically over the wall, through the branches of a tree and over a swimming pool before it landed on the front of the green. From there he chipped in. Typical!

For almost all of last year, it was Ballesteros the broody. He was moody, not magnificent, hitting more bad shots than one would have thought possible. When he saw Ian Woollam among some trees at Valderrama during a practice round for the Ryder Cup, Ballesteros feigned surprise: "What are you doing in there, Ian? You're playing like me."



Ballesteros swings crisply into his approach shot to the 9th during his opening round of 68 in Dubai yesterday

He did not, as the Scots say, have to seek out his worries. As captain of the first Europe Ryder Cup team to compete in Spain, he fretted when it looked as though a Spaniard might not be included.

When the form of first Miguel Angel Martin and then José Maria Olazábal meant such an indignity would be avoided, Ballesteros became weighed down with other matters.

Not until Europe had won did the smile really reappear. Then his golf began to improve, too. One week after Valderrama, Ballesteros played a tournament in Germany in which he started with a 74 and ended with a 68. Nothing to write home about, but a harbinger, perhaps.

In Dubai in 1990,

Ballesteros gave a clinic that held hundreds of spectators in thrall. He hit shots off his knees, played cut up chips with a five-iron and exploded from bunkers with a three-iron. Routine stuff for him, magic for everyone else. He likes Dubai, likes the sun on his back, the flat course that is not tiring to walk.

In Dubai this week, where he is playing in his first event of the season, Ballesteros has been talkative, friendly and relaxed. It has been possible to ask him a question and get a thoughtful reply instead of him staring back at you, as much as to say: "Why are you asking me that?"

If he had been listening, he would have heard other players talking about him. "From the bottom of my heart I wish

the best of luck to Seve," Olazábal said. Ernie Els said: "He was one of my heroes growing up. I don't think there is anybody like Seve when he has got confidence and is striding around the place. I think we all want him back."

Ballesteros reports that he wintered well. He has a new caddie and a new five-year contract with a German clothing manufacturer. One of his brothers is acting as his manager until a replacement is found for Roddy Carr.

"I have a great family and good health," Ballesteros, who will be 41 in a few weeks, said. "If I played well, great. If I don't, I will still be a happy man. I feel grateful for what I have gained through golf. I have been practising hard and exercising. I have been swimming a lot, swimming

backstroke, which is good for my back." Then he went out and played a decent round, a 68, four under par, in which he was off the fairway only three times. A few years ago he would have been on the fairway only three times.

Progress is made in small strides. It is not time to hang out the Spanish flags. It may be a while before those alliterative headlines start to reappear: "Seve sizzles to 66." Ballesteros has to play this course this afternoon, when the wind will have got up and we will see how accurate he is then. But we can hope. Ballesteros playing well enough once again to win tournaments regularly would be one of the best things that could happen to golf in Europe. The game is not so big if you do without swimming a lot, swimming

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04 Giancarlo Fisichella	10 Jean Alesi	15 Johnny Herbert	21 Shinji Nakano
05 Jacques Villeneuve	11 Rubens Barrichello	16 Mika Salo	22 Esteban Tuero*
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# Triple jumpers can restore Great Britain's fortunes at world indoor championships

## Revival bid may come in leaps and bounds

FROM DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT IN VALENCIA

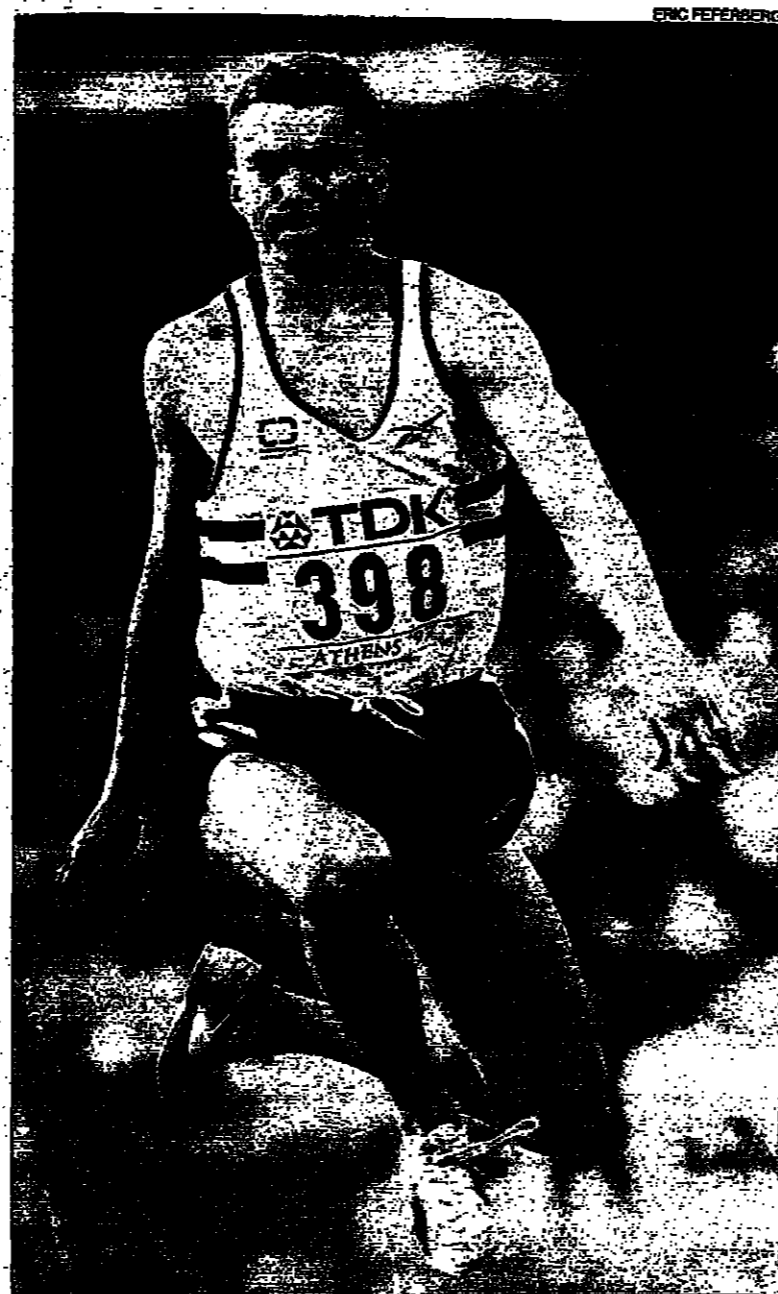
IT MAY be only a hop, step and a jump to Jonathan Edwards and Astia Hansen, but the potential catapult effect of the triple jump is what British athletics is counting on here this weekend to launch a revival. The Africans have dominated the indoor stage this winter, with a profusion of middle-distance world records, but now it may be Great Britain's turn to mark out new boundaries.

The three-day European indoor championships, which begin this morning, are critical to Britain's attempt to regain the image of success it enjoyed for 16 years until it failed to win a gold medal at either the 1996 Olympic Games or 1997 world championships. Winning the men's European Cup last June was conveniently forgotten by the backstabbers and the blood-flow thickened when the national governing body was declared insolvent last October.

The status of British athletics has gone down rapidly. Max Jones, Britain's head coach for the first time at an international championship, said yesterday, Jones has succeeded Malcolm Arnold and he is optimistic that the athletes will give him a solid platform to build on.

"This is the start of a sea-change," he added. While that may be, to some extent, dependent on the emerging male sprinters who will be contesting senior individual medals here, Edwards and Hansen can lead the way at these championships.

Their recent form has been good enough not only to establish their gold medal



Edwards, left, and Hansen are in excellent form and are capable of winning gold in Valencia this weekend — and setting world records

credentials this weekend, but sufficient to indicate that both could illuminate the championships with world records. "It is not inconceivable," Tudor Bidder, Britain's technical director for jumps, said yesterday.

Bidder's choice of words to express his optimism may have been absurd, but when he said that Edwards was "1,000 per cent fit", the message was unmistakable: the Gateshead Harrier is ready to recapture the spirit of 1995.

That was the year in which Edwards set three outdoor world records, won the outdoor world title and produced the longest wind-assisted jump. Out of his barely-noticed shell, he hatched into the BBC Sports Personality of the Year. After that, Olympics and world silver medals were considered failure.

Now, though, Edwards is rebuilding. Two weeks ago, he broke the 17-year-old British indoor record with 17.64 metres. His nearest challenger here, Denis Kapustin, from Russia, has not jumped within 40 centimetres of him this winter.

The 20-centimetres that Edwards needs to find to break the world record of 17.83 metres, set last year by Alexander Urrutia, from Cuba, is not much of an asking distance. Bidder even suggested that Edwards may treat the championships to the first indoor jump of 18 metres.

For Hansen, too, the world record is tantalisingly close. "Astia is capable of it," Bidder said. This winter she has improved her British and Commonwealth record to 14.85 metres and, given that

the world record is 15.03 metres, Hansen is one centimetre closer to the target than Edwards.

Hansen said yesterday that she thought a jump of 15 metres would be needed to win. Reluctant to discuss the world record, she did at least admit: "It is there in the back of my mind." Which is where she wants to keep it. "I'll think about it too much. I will try too hard and boil over," she said.

First and foremost, Hansen must concentrate on beating the opposition, which is stronger than Edwards faces. The quality in depth of the women's triple jump, measured against world standards, makes it the most difficult event to win here.

Whereas Edwards's main rivals are from Cuba and the United States, the women's strength is set firmly in Europe. Every medal at the past three global championships — Olympics, world indoors, world outdoors — has gone to a European.

To win, Hansen will need to defeat three of the four women who finished ahead of her at the outdoor world championships in Athens last year. Furthermore, she must not be intimidated by how poorly she has performed in the past two European indoor championships.

In 1994, she jumped only 13.30 metres and failed to reach the final. Worse was to follow in 1996 when, with three no jumps, she failed to register a distance. Hansen, Rodica Mateescu, from Romania, and Sarka Kasparikova, from the Czech Republic, should contest the medals.

Many familiar British faces are missing here, notably Colin Jackson and the front-line attack in the 400 metres. However, new forces are gathering. In the 60 metres, Dwan Chambers, 19 and running an individual event at a senior championship for the first time, is one of three Britons ranked in the top seven in Europe this season. Chambers is the world junior record-holder in the 100 metres after his 10.06sec last year. The more experienced Jason Gardner and Darren Braithwaite are the other two Britons.

In the 200 metres, Julian Golding, 23, is the quickest in the world this year and is attempting to win the title that launched Linford Christie's career in 1986, also in Spain. Britain is expected to win the 400 metres, even without Black, Ladejo, Baulch, Thomas and Richardson. Another Briton, Solomon Wariso, leads the world rankings but top place on the dais may go to Sean Baldock who, at 21, is ten years Wariso's junior. Jackson will not be missed if Tony Jarrett wins the 60 metres hurdles, but Falk Balzer, of Germany, may prove too strong.

## HOCKEY: COACH HAPPY WITH DISPLAY IN OPPRESSIVE HEAT

### England upset their hosts

ENGLAND tuned up for the Sultan Azlan Shah tournament here yesterday with a 2-1 victory over Malaysia, the host country who will be England's opponents in the first match of the series tomorrow.

Barry Dancer, the England coach, was satisfied with the result. "It is always good to start a tour with a win," he said. "The oppressive heat caused us to play different

FROM SYDNEY FRISKIN IN IPOH, MALAYSIA

I look at this tournament as an opportunity to evaluate the way we want to play. Fortunately, there are no injuries, but not all the players are acclimatised. As for the match, England led 1-0 at half-time with a goal by Lee, who replaced the injured Crutchley.

Nor Azlan Bakher, one of Malaysia's new players, levelled the score shortly after the resumption of play. England survived a testing time as the Malaysians increased their work rate, but in the last ten minutes England gained the upper hand and Garcia sealed victory with a well-taken goal.

Most of the teams in this six-nation tournament are experimenting with an eye on the World Cup in Holland in May. The Germans have selected ten of their World Cup squad. Australia have done the same. New Zealand will be trying to assert themselves in this, their first tournament since qualifying for the World Cup. Finally, South Korea, who have been in the doldrums, are redoubting their efforts.

The premier division of the National League has been suspended and will not be resumed until March 14. The first division continues with a full programme this weekend.

## SAILING: HEAT TAKES ITS TOLL ON WHITBREAD STRAGGLERS

### Fleet running out of energy

THE final stage of the fifth leg of the Whitbread Round the World Race is becoming a painfully slow, upwind slog for all the boats still racing. The tired crews are running out of food and temperatures in the 90s are turning their boats into saunas.

The original estimated time for this long leg from Auckland was 23 days, but BrunelSunergy and Chessie Racing, who are still disputing second place, are not expected to close the finish line until this after 27 days at sea and three days behind the Swedish yacht, *EF Language*, which completed the leg on Tuesday.

The boats contesting fourth place a further 100 miles behind — Swedish Match, Merit Cup and Toshiba — may not arrive until tomorrow.

Yesterday, BrunelSunergy, the only J/108/Vrolvik-designed hull in a race dominated by Bruce Farr designs, was 12 miles ahead of Chessie Racing. The Dutch have sailed well to maintain their advan-

FROM EDWARD GORMAN SAILING CORRESPONDENT IN SAO SEBASTIAO

tage over the American crew who are tiring, despite taking on extra food near Cape Horn when they picked up spares for their generator.

On *Toshiba*, skippered by Paul Standbridge, which made such a good start to this leg, there is much frustration as they try to catch Merit Cup and Swedish Match. Last night they were eating their last proper food and will have to make do with pot noodles until the finish.

Ahead of them, Grant Dalton, on the fifth-placed Merit Cup, said he was hot, hungry and frustrated as he battled an ever-changing wind and counter-current. "We are now into serious food rationing and have another 36 hours to go — even now you have to chase your food round the bowl to get the small amount on to your spoon," he said. "Everyone is now wearing belts with their

trousers as it's the only way of keeping them up. We have lost far more weight than we did on the first leg, so it will be a 'seafood' diet for us when we eventually arrive."

The all-female crew aboard the 92ft catamaran, *Royal & Sun-Alliance*, led by Tracy Edwards, are achieving some good daily runs as they continue into the Roaring Forties to the south of the Cape of Good Hope. After 23 full days at sea, *Royal & Sun-Alliance* has sailed 7,409 miles at an average speed of 13.4 knots.

Edwards is still in touch with the pace set by the non-stop round-the-world record-holder, Olivier de Kersauson, of France, despite unfavourable winds for much of the voyage and broken gear. Edwards is 520 miles behind de Kersauson's position at the corresponding time in his circumnavigation. This may seem a lot, but it amounts to just a day and a half's sailing in favourable conditions.

## Slough relish challenge

WITH a sixth Premier Division title safety in the bag, Slough have their sights set on winning a medal in the European indoor championship, which starts in Russelsheim, near Frankfurt, today (Cathy Harris writes).

They face the daunting task of meeting Russelsheim, the hosts, holders, and six-time winners, in their opening match this afternoon, but Sue Chandler, the England

indoor captain, said: "When we won the European title in Glasgow two years ago, they had a lot of players in the German side, so we know we can do it."

"If we don't concede too many penalty corners and convert the ones that we earn, we should do well."

Clubs in Russelsheim (Ger), Slough (Eng), Sheffield (Eng), Stevenage (Eng), Poole (Eng), Rochdale (Eng), Club de Campo (Esp), Stade Francais (Fra), Edinburgh Ladies (Sco).

## CRICKET: PAKISTAN NO 7 PLAYS MEMORABLE INNINGS AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA WHILE ANDY FLOWER RESCUES ZIMBABWE

### Azhar's class beyond doubt

DURBAN (first day of five; South Africa won toss): South Africa, with nine first-innings wickets in hand, are 230 runs behind Pakistan.

IN ENGLAND, a batsman often does not fulfil his promise until he has reached the age of 30. A Pakistani, by contrast, seemingly reaches maturity as soon as he plays international cricket. Azhar Mahmood, 23, tomorrow, made his third Test century in only his eighth international yesterday, stroking the South African bowling around Kingsmead with feline grace.

At the Wanderers, in the future first match of this short series, Azhar scored 136. His century yesterday was char-

acterised again by being made when Pakistan were in considerable disorder, having lost five wickets for 95.

Donald, although he was not at his sharpest on a typically muggy day, took five wickets for the tenth time in Test cricket. De Villiers, given the new ball on his return to the side, deserved more than the wicket of Mohd Khan, and Pollock made the initial breakthrough.

Azhar's first scoring shot was a cover-driven four off Donald, which would have satisfied any batsman. Two other shots off the same bowler, a straight drive and a

hook, were terrific. He believes in finding the boundary as often as possible, as 24 fours in his innings of 132, made from only 163 balls, would indicate.

Extraordinarily, even after making 128 on his debut against South Africa in Pakistan earlier this winter, Azhar was still regarded as a natural successor to Waqar Younis, the fast bowler. If that really is the case, he will be a heck of a cricketer. This accounts, no doubt, for the fact that he is batting as low as No 7 — at any rate for the moment.

With Shoab Akhtar, Azhar added 80 for the ninth wicket, of which his contribution was 71. When he was last out, it was to the shot of a tired man.

### Slater to cross the county line

DERBYSHIRE have signed Michael Slater, the Australia opening batsman, as their overseas player for the coming season after Saeed Anwar, their original choice, said that he could not guarantee his availability for the full campaign because of international commitments (Richard Hobson writes).

Vict Brownett, the club chairman, told Derbyshire officials to press ahead with a contingency arrangement to sign Slater after meeting Saeed and officials from the Pakistan Cricket Board in South Africa this week.

John Smedley, the Derbyshire secretary, said: "We feel we are replacing one very good player with another of similar quality." Slater, 28, is on the Australia tour of India and has scored 2,655 runs at an average of 47.41 in 34 Tests.

Nottinghamshire will hold talks with Chris Read next week in an attempt to bring the England A wicketkeeper to Trent Bridge. Read, 19, is available as an uncontested list-two registration after Gloucestershire withdrew their offer of a contract.

### Doull's burst lifts New Zealand

AUCKLAND (first day of five; Zimbabwe won toss): New Zealand, with eight first-innings wickets in hand, are 101 runs behind Zimbabwe.

ZIMBABWE, dismissed for 170 on the opening day of the second Test, fought back to take two New Zealand wickets before the close but still have a long way to go to get back into the match.

Simon Doull, the fast bowler, put New Zealand in control in the morning, taking four wickets as he he ripped the heart out of the top order, making Alistair Campbell regret his decision to bat on a pitch tinged with green.

Doull dismissed Gavin Rennie in the first over and Grant Flower in his fifth to reduce Zimbabwe to 32 for two before rain interrupted play for 30 minutes. After that break, Doull took two more wickets as three batsmen fell to catches in the slips while three runs were scored. Doull accounted for Murray Goodwin and Campbell before Dion Nash clipped in by removing Guy Whittall.

After lunch, Zimbabwe found the going rather easier. Andy Flower, with a dogged

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TENNIS

# Richardson bows out after failing test of nerve

By Julian Muscat, Tennis Correspondent

AFTER matching Marc-Kevin Gollner blow by blow for 106 minutes in the Guardian Direct Cup at Battersea Park in London yesterday, Andrew Richardson indulged in two minutes of folly to demonstrate why he resides 78 places below his opponent on the world rankings ladder.

The Great Britain No 3 had offered Gollner, ranked No 68 in the world, not a sniff of an opportunity in his 12 preceding service games. Serving to stay in their second-round match at 5-6, though, his composure deserted him. It was a cruel, if instructive, way for Richardson to end his

dumped his volley into the net. "In the end I was a bit lucky to have won," Gollner said. "I felt in charge until 2-2 in the second set, when he started staying back [from the net] after his serve. He wasn't missing anything; he was hitting rockets into the corners."

Richardson said: "Perhaps I lost my concentration after winning my service games so easily. I'm disappointed to have lost, but not with the way I played. Sooner or later I've got to start winning these [close] matches. I can play at this level, but I've got to get to this level on a more consistent basis."

Richardson, 24 next month, now faces a return to second-tier tournaments. "I don't have a problem getting motivated, but it is harder in Challengers," he said. Had he held his nerve here, he might have taken a significant step towards leaving those Challengers behind him.

He would gladly embrace the problems affecting Gollner early in his career. The son of a diplomat, Gollner moved to London five years ago to escape the attentions of the German press. He had rocketed up the world rankings and was besieged by reporters searching for the heir-apparent to Boris Becker. A knock on the Lawn Tennis Association's door opened up the training facility at Queen's for him and he has been here ever since.

Gollner had words of encouragement for Richardson. "Andrew is in a very good situation," he said. "He can work with Greg and Tim [Henman], get tips from them, if they help him. He can learn quickly. He has the ability to improve his ranking, no question."

At least Richardson was keeping good company in



Pioline hits a forehand during his victory over Korda, the No 1 seed, yesterday



Korda: back complaint

involvement in this event. A tamey-hit overhead, which Gollner gratefully returned with interest, and an errant forehand off a half-court ball saw Richardson facing match point. Those loose shots effectively sealed his fate after he had traded evenly with the conqueror of Greg Rusedski.

Richardson, 24 next month, now faces a return to second-tier tournaments. "I don't have a problem getting motivated, but it is harder in Challengers," he said. Had he held his nerve here, he might have taken a significant step towards leaving those Challengers behind him.

defeat. His exit followed that of Petr Korda, the No 1 seed, who never found his rhythm during a straight-sets defeat by Cedric Pioline, of France. Korda complained of a bad back, which has been deteriorating since he won the Australian Open four weeks ago. Korda served poorly in the first set and, though he improved in the second, Pioline

ranked No 18 in the world, and a semi-finalist in St Petersburg in his previous tournament — committed just eight unforced errors in his 6-3, 6-3 victory. The outcome was vastly different to Pioline's drubbing by Korda in the last 16 in Melbourne. Even after beating David Prinosil on Tuesday, Korda, the world No 2, looked unhap-

py to be away from his family, who are residing in Florida. He lamented that his daughter, Jessica, was not there to take his mind off the game's incessant demands. Nor will he be on hand to celebrate her fifth birthday today. Korda's defeat also severed his prospects of overthrowing Pete Sampras as world No 1. Rusedski entertained similar prospects before his defeat on Wednesday. Their tame exits demonstrate that it is one thing to get close to Sampras, quite another to dethrone him.

At least Pat Rafter, another casting covetous eyes on Sampras's crown, kept himself in contention by beating Magnus Gustafsson, of Sweden, 6-3, 7-6. For all that, Rafter appears some way removed from the form that won him the US Open. It was at this juncture 12 months ago that he started his improvement. This would be an opportune week for him to rediscover his mettle.

TELEVISION CHOICE

## From shingle to Somerset

**Coast to Coast**  
**BBC2, 8.00pm**  
Setting off on the first stage of a 500-mile walk, Janet Street-Porter reveals that she grew up in Wales. And so she might, though it does make her Cockney accent difficult to explain. In this seven-part series the former president of the Ramblers Association will be crossing southern England from Kent to Somerset, then tackling Wales from south to north. The programmes are partly about walking, partly about frequent expostives about badly signposted footpaths and blistered feet, partly a guide to the topography and partly an opportunity to feature any celebrities who happen to cross our host's path. Dungeness, the "largest shingle peninsula in the world", is Street-Porter's point of departure. From there she takes in Derek Jarman's cottage garden, gets lost in a field of oilseed rape and bumps into Vic Reeves at Camber Sands.



Anderson, Hardy, Garden (BBC2, 10pm)

**Never Mind the Buzzcocks**  
**BBC2, 9.30pm**  
The show that does for pop music what *They Think They Know* does for sport is back for a third series. Irreverent quizzes are all the fashion (yet another starts tonight: see next entry) but irreverence, given too much of it, can pull just as quickly as deference. This will not deter the deadpan Mark Lamarr and the team captain Sean Hughes and Phil Jupitus as they take another noisy trawl through pop trivia. The new series for the new series include one on musical law suits and another on previously unappreciated links between unlikely artists. Old favourites, such as asking panelists to sing intros and recite next lines, are retained. The guests tonight are two pop artists, the singer Coachella and Cece Matthews from Catatonia, Jonathan Ross and the comedian Donna McPhail.

Garden, on Radio 4's *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue*, and Hardy, on the same channel's *News Quiz*, are proven wits, while Anderson is probably better doing this sort of thing than trying to upstage his guests on chat shows. As a favour of what to expect, one round obliges contestants to argue against statements made by their opponents. In another round the teams have to deal with as many questions as possible without saying yes or no, while in a third they must make stirring oratory out of such unpromising material as shopping lists and shipping forecasts.

**If I Ruled the World**  
**BBC2, 10.00pm**  
Clive Anderson hosts a new comedy quiz in which Graeme Garden and Jeremy Hardy lead two teams and the idea is to make fun of politicians. As reading takes place in translation it has not been possible to see the programme in advance, so it could be good, bad or dreadful. But

**King of the Hill**  
**Channel 4, 10.30pm**  
The intellectually-challenged Teas family is back with more animated adventures. One of the pleasures of *King of the Hill* is its (probably deliberate) lack of polish. The drawing is basic, the presentation wooden and the characters speak in a monotone which suggests robots rather than human beings. And we are not just talking about *Boyz n the City*, the guy who delights in being incomprehensible. Far from being a drawback, however, this style which denies style perfectly suits the aim of the piece, to portray simple people behaving stupidly. Tonight's plot has Hank, the head of the family, trying to get rid of his unwelcome lodger, while in another he is sending her back to her trailer park. But sitcoms cannot afford to lose their leading characters so easily. Peter Waymark

RADIO CHOICE

**A Beginner's Guide to... Racing**  
**Talk Radio, midday**  
Talk Radio is just past its third birthday and celebrating its best listening figures. The revamp of the station since the early days of "shock jocks" has transformed it into a genuine contender in the speech radio stakes, which, appropriately enough, sounds like the name of a horse race: perhaps it should be the name of a horse race, sponsored by Talk Radio. Anyway, today the midday Kate Robbins programme, which competes directly for the lunchtime audience with Eddie Mair on Radio 5 Live, has Richard Fitton explaining the mysteries of racing, including how odds are calculated. Will he explain why bookies drive Rollers and their punters ride on buses? Only by implication, I dare say.

**Sound Stories: Great Dancers**  
**Radio 3, 11.00am**  
This series, by Peggy Reynolds, ends on a high note with a profile of the French dancer Sylvie Guillem, star of the Royal Ballet for some years now. She has transformed out as a gymnast, which is probably what has helped make her such a strong and supple dancer. Rudolf Nureyev, during his time at the Paris Opera, spotted her and made her a star in Paris as well as putting her in front of British audiences for the first time. But the relationship ended when Guillem and Nureyev fell out in a big way and Guillem left Paris, whose loss proved to be London's gain. The split was predictable given that Guillem already had a reputation for being outspoken, which fits well with her daring and provocative approach to dance. Peter Barnard

RADIO 1

6.30am Kevin Greening and Zeb Bell 9.00 Simon Mayo 12.00 Jo Whiley. Includes 12.30pm Newsbeat 2.00 Mark Radcliffe 4.00 Dave Pearce. Includes 5.45 Newsbeat 6.00 Pete Tong: 7.00 Steve Lamacq 7.30 Alan Carr's One Man Band 8.00 Rap Show 2.00am Fabio and Grooverider 4.00 Charlie Jordan.

RADIO 2

6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan 9.30 Ken Bruce 11.30 Anne Robinson 1.30pm Debbie Thorne 2.00 John Peel 5.05pm John Peel 7.00 One Man Band 7.30 Friday Night in Music Night 8.00am Biggs conducts the BBC Concert Orchestra. With Elizabeth Gale and Peter Skellern 8.15pm Whistle Down the Line (41) 9.30pm News 10.00pm The Arts Programme 12.00am Graham Norton 4.00 Late Sharnia

RADIO 5 LIVE

6.00am The Breakfast Programme 9.00 Nick Campbell 12.00 midday with Mark 2.00pm Radio 5 Live 4.00 Radio 5 Live 7.00 News 7.30 Alan Carr's One Man Band 8.00 Friday Night in Music Night 8.00am Biggs conducts the BBC Concert Orchestra. With Elizabeth Gale and Peter Skellern 8.15pm Whistle Down the Line (41) 9.30pm News 10.00pm The Arts Programme 12.00am Graham Norton 4.00 Late Sharnia

WORLD SERVICE

6.00am Newsway 6.30 Europe Today 7.00 News 7.15 On the Spot: Air and Angles 7.30 Best on Record 8.00 News 8.15 Focus on Thought 8.30 Westway 8.50pm News 9.00 News 9.15 The Learning World 9.30 BBC English: The Art of Writing 9.45 Sports Roundup 10.00 Newsbeat 10.30 Assignment 11.00 Newsbeat 11.30 Focus on Faith 12.00 News 12.05pm World Service Report 12.15pm Focus on Faith 12.30pm News 2.05pm News 2.30pm News 3.00pm News 3.15pm News 3.30pm News 3.45pm News 4.00pm News 4.15pm News 4.30pm News 4.45pm News 4.55pm News 5.00pm News 5.15pm News 5.30pm News 5.45pm News 5.55pm News 6.00pm News 6.15pm News 6.30pm News 6.45pm News 6.55pm News 7.00pm News 7.15pm News 7.30pm News 7.45pm News 7.55pm News 8.00pm News 8.15pm News 8.30pm News 8.45pm News 8.55pm News 9.00pm News 9.15pm News 9.30pm News 9.45pm News 9.55pm News 10.00pm News 10.15pm News 10.30pm News 10.45pm News 10.55pm News 11.00pm News 11.15pm News 11.30pm News 11.45pm News 11.55pm News 12.00pm News 12.15pm News 12.30pm News 12.45pm 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RACING 49

Thompson humiliated by Ramsdens' libel trial verdict

SPORT

GOLF 52

Ballesteros in Dubai with a gleam in his eye

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 27 1998

Atherton has difficult selection problem to resolve in his fiftieth Test as captain

Confident England feel spinners could hold key

FROM ALAN LEE CRICKET CORRESPONDENT IN GEORGETOWN GUYANA



Ramprakash, at practice yesterday, has earned his recall, while Atherton senses a chance to emulate Hutton

Table with batting and captaincy records for Michael Atherton. Columns include M, I, NO, Runs, HS, Ave, 100, 50, Ct.

ENGLAND



Green for quality line to throne

EVER since they so stirringly defeated West Indies in Trinidad, England have been questioning the wisdom of loyalty to a winning team.

Already, a batting reshuffle has been decreed, with John Crawley the principal casualty.

Still more interesting and influential, however, is the choice of bowlers, which will be finalised only after a last inspection of the Test pitch.

Robert Croft has earned his first Test of the tour with a match return of 11 for 101 against Guyana and even if England revert to a single spinner, he could play ahead

of Philip Tuftell. Since they struck up such a profitable partnership in New Zealand a year ago, England have imposed greater control whenever Croft and Tuftell operate together.

The drawback, of course, is the consequent shallowness of the seam attack. Angus Fraser is a reassuring presence but it is asking a lot of Dean Headley, in only his seventh Test, to carry increased responsibilities.

Even West Indies, instinctively so reluctant to be deflected from their predilection for pace, have read the signals.

West Indies, of course, will still have three seam bowlers, fronted by the best new-ball pair around, but the shift of emphasis is marked.

ferred something at the farthest extreme — but the inevitability of it has imposed new thinking.

They will decide this morning which of their fast bowlers to omit but Ian Bishop seems more likely to play the supporting role for the incomparable

Ramprakash impressed various England players when taking five wickets against them at Pointe-à-Pierre and his rapid dismissal of Hollisake, whose technique is exposed by high quality spin, contributed to England's selection.

That result preceded an embarrassment in Trinidad and the concession of the series after just three Tests.

Only four men have captained 50 Tests teams but Atherton, characteristically, said: "I'm not that fussed about it."

Though that was Ramprakash's first innings of the tour, his footwork was strikingly positive. Like most of the players, he was counselled, last week, by the team's visiting psychologist, Stephen Bull, but it was Ramprakash's own initiative to play down his prospects of reclaiming a Test place.

He will be striving to disown the memories of the corresponding week, four years ago, when a century in the pre-Test fixture in Georgetown brought another false dawn in his maddeningly unfulfilled career.

He made two and five in that Test match lost by an innings.

Arbat's assault, page 53 Zimbabwe struggle, page 53

DETAILS

ENGLAND (from): M A Atherton (capt), A J Stewart, M A Butler, N Hussain, G P Thomas, M R Ramprakash, R C Russell, A R Caddick, R D B Croft, D W Headley, A R C Fraser, P R Tuftell.

WEST INDIES (from): S L Campbell, S C Williams, B C Lara (capt), C L Hooper, S Chandernagor, C A Miller, D Williams, I Bishop, D Ramnarine, C E L Ambrose, C A Walsh, R C Holder, N A M McLean.

TELEVISION TIMES: Live Sky Sports 2 2.00pm-9.00. Highlights: BBC1 11.45pm-12.15. RADIO: Radio 4 (Long Wave): 2.00pm-6.00; 8.30-9.15.

rable Curtly Ambrose and Courtney Walsh.

The pre-series rumours of their mutual decline and retirement now seem a cruel deception and England's only consolation is that the opposition plainly depend upon them to an unhealthy extent.

Walsh today becomes the first West Indian bowler to play 100 Tests but it is Ambrose, with 17 wickets already in the series, whose lofty reputation is being further enhanced.

"I am very happy with the announcement," Vickery, 21, said. "To be honest, I didn't think that I had much chance and maybe a reduction in the suspension was the best I could hope for, but I have enjoyed the full support of England's management and the Gloucester club. I even received letters of encouragement from people in Wales and that has been very important."

"I cannot condone what I did and I'm not proud of my actions, but clearly something needs to be done to sort out the whole citing procedure. The referee [Colin Hawke, from New Zealand] said that if he'd seen the incident, he would either have given me a yellow card or awarded a penalty against England, so there's something wrong somewhere."

Vickery victory strikes telling blow for change

BY DAVID HANDS RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

Vickery was cited by Welsh Rugby Union officials for punching Colin Charvis. Peter Boyle, the match commissioner, imposed the mandatory sentence. However, the Rugby Football Union supported Vickery's appeal in the belief that the disciplinary regulations should be reviewed because they are full of inconsistencies.

In essence, the requirement to cite should be removed from the contending parties and become the responsibility of



Vickery: encouragement

an independent adjudicator, as in rugby league. "It is imperative for the benefit of the game to reaffirm the observance of fair play and a sporting spirit," Allan Hosie, chairman of the Five Nations committee, said. "We shall continue our long-held policy of fair but firm action when cases of foul play arise."

Provided that he overcomes a slight back injury, Vickery will now be available for his club's next Allied Dunbar Premiership match, against London Irish on March 7, and for England's next international, against Scotland at Murrayfield on March 22.

Brewer's recipe, page 50 Ireland changes, page 50

FA seeks aid for homeless

BY RUSSELL KEMPSON

ENGLAND are hoping to play their international matches at leading provincial grounds, including Old Trafford, if Wembley Stadium is closed for reconstruction work after the 1999 FA Cup final.

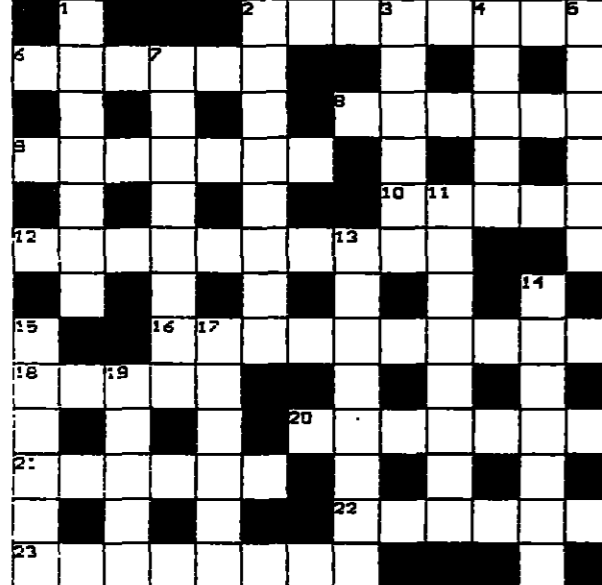
The committee's decision, taken with comparative rapidity after legal consultation, implies that Wales should not have taken action in the first place and affirms the stance taken by Clive Woodward, the England coach. "It's important now that we get a clear understanding of the whole procedure — when and when not to cite players," Woodward said. "We want no replication of what happened last weekend. I'm pleased for Phil because clearly the punishment did not fit the crime."

Old Trafford was used for England's match against South Africa last May, which they won 2-1. "We were not too surprised by the RFU's decision and we have been looking at other options," an FA spokesman said.

Hitches at Palace, page 51 Horton at Brighton, page 51

OBSCENE advertisement with 'THINK st' and 'FIRST TELECOM 0800 458 6666'.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1340

- ACROSS: 2 More likely than not (8) 6 African expedition (6) 8 Hurling: going by air (6) 9 Specially made (suit) (7) 10 Thieves' slang (5) 12 Rashness (10) 16 Neck and neck (esp. US) (3,3,4) 18 Leaves: even (5) 21 Escape: go on holiday (3,4) 23 Attack, criticism, violently (6) 22 Older, more important (6) 23 Fine weather (8)

- DOWN: 1 Capital of Sicily (7) 2 Taken into hand; gained (speed) (6,2) 3 Comedie humaine author (6) 4 Fetch (5) 5 The last Kings Henry, Edward (6) 7 Obvious type of heir (8) 11 Hold back (8) 13 Gibberish (8) 14 Eight-sided figure (7) 15 Wives of braves (6) 17 Major OT prophet (6) 19 Henrik —, dramatist (5)

THE TIMES BOOKSHOP advertisement for crossword titles.

Saturday advertisement for the fourth Test in Georgetown.

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